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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XVIII. No. 450 (New Series) SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1939 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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OUR REPLY TO HITLER

WE are not in the least surprised that Mr. Lloyd George's speech in the House of Commons on Tuesday had a bad reception in parts of the House and generally in the press. That was bound to happen in circumstances in which a good many people do not want to think. He was at any rate right to this extent; it would be most unwise to reject outright an expected offer which has not yet been received, and whose nature is still unknown. The offer, when it comes, may prove to be entirely unacceptable; the future of Czechoslovakia and Poland, for instance, cannot possibly be excluded from any Peace Conference—if one is possible—at Hitler's fiat. If, however, Stalin—to say nothing of Mussolini— happens to wish peace to be made, he is in a position to compel Hitler to put forward proposals which it will be morally and politically obligatory on the British and French Governments not to reject out of hand. If—and it is a big "if"—such proposals are made, we have everything to gain and nothing to lose by a readiness to discuss. We should put forward our own positive proposals; we should certainly not say, as Mr. Shaw implies in our columns, that we are ready to make peace on any or no terms. The strong point in Mr. Shaw's argument is that this war in which we are engaged has changed into a different war since the Soviet Union entered Poland and made its latest agreements with the Nazis. This being so, we ought to reconsider our position very carefully and above all to find out as much as we possibly can about the Soviet Union's policy and intentions before we commit ourselves further. Our object, whatever the method, must assuredly be to free Europe and Germany from Hitlerism.

Let us be mindful, above all else, that by far our best, and perhaps our only, chance at present of getting our position understood by the German people is to address them, and the whole world, in such a way that the Nazis will be powerless to suppress our message. A Conference, at which we can talk to the German people and Hitler will be compelled to talk to, instead of at, us, is exactly the best means of propaganda at our disposal—above all, if it can be made a conference in which President Roosevelt as well as Stalin plays an active part. If our war aims do make for a durable world peace based on liberty and justice it is greatly to our advantage that we should be able to state them, in the most formal and conclusive way, to the German people with all the world as audience. Moreover, before the "frightfulness"—the real war—is begun in earnest, let us lose no opportunity of talking, people to people, and making sure that there is no other way out. When once the bombing has begun, it will not be easy to stop it, or to prevent public opinion on both sides

from degenerating into mass hysteria. We strongly endorse Mr. Lloyd George's plea for a secret session of Parliament, after a peace offer has been received, but before an answer to it has been either made or decided upon.

Efficiency in War

The Admiralty under Mr. Churchill seems to be the one Department of State that appears both energetic and efficient. Mr. Churchill was able to boast that we had captured more valuable material than we had lost from the U-boat campaign. In several other important Departments the incapacity of the old Civil Service to cope with war conditions is only too obvious, though in many cases Civil Servants may be less to blame than the Cabinet which gives no decisive direction. Soon there is likely to be a strong demand for a more effective conduct of the war. What we fear is that the campaign for efficiency may be confused with a campaign for an ill-considered policy of attack. We have no doubt that the Government's conception of a defensive war on the Western Front is correct. If the war objective on which everybody agrees is a revolution in Germany, the blockade (partly effective in spite of Russian neutrality), defensive war and a propaganda campaign are the right technique. Unfortunately, the propaganda is very badly done. The Germans are still far ahead of us in neutral countries and the leaflets that have been dropped over Germany have not always even been in good German. Only a few sentences should be printed on one side of the leaflets and a slogan on the other. They ought to be readable by people walking along the street who dare not pick them up, and the sentences should be striking and hit at the weak spots in the Hitler regime. There were good things in the Archbishop of York's broadcast, but we are sure that he was completely wrong to lay it down as a principle that there should be "no talk with Hitler." If only Hitler would talk, an enormous advance would be made. Our task is to put forward positive and revolutionary proposals. In Russia and Germany, badly fed though the people are, there is still amongst the younger people a revolutionary faith. The one thing that is certain in a world of perplexities is that the old order will not survive. If we conquer it must be for a new idea.

Peter the Greater

Very much faster then Peter the Great managed to do it, and without spilling blood, Stalin has recovered the use of the Baltic shores for Russia. The treaty imposed on Esthonia made of that country a protectorate disguised as an ally—precisely what Irak and Egypt are in relation to the British Empire. Russia will have naval and aerial bases on the islands of Oesel and Dago, a military aerodrome near Tallinn, and the use of its port. Each State may use the other's railways and canals and the volume of trade is to be increased. Esthonia is tied to Russia as a perpetual ally, but is permitted to retain her capitalistic social structure. The foreign ministers of Latvia and Lithuania were next summoned to the Metropolis of the East, to receive similar decrees that will regulate their future. Lithuania, which inclines to be anti-German, will be handled with relative kindness, and may get a small share in the loot of Poland, but not, it would seem, her ancient capital, Vilna. Her railway system will be used to give the Russians access to the Latvian port of Libau. The treaty with Latvia is believed to be on the lines of the Esthonian model. What fate awaits Finland is not yet clear. Omnipotent in the East, for the time being, because Germany is busy in the West, Russia has used her giant's strength with relative moderation. She has taken all she wanted from the Baltic States, but left them, what their ruling class chiefly values, profits and the private ownership of land. Meanwhile in Asia Stalin is also on the move: does the advance in Sinkiang mean that he has an understanding with Japan as well as Germany?

The Turkish Dilemma

Deliberate discourtesy was always a weapon of which diplomacy makes occasional use. M. Sarajoglu, in spite of an urgent summons to Moscow, has had to spend an idle week between two interviews. It is believed that the Kremlin began by demanding that Turkey should abandon her alliance with the Western Powers, which has been initialed but not yet signed. Stalin, it is reported, has now modified his demand. He asks that the long-standing pact of friendship between Turkey and Russia shall be strengthened, so as to require either party to give military aid to the other, if attacked by a third Power. But Stalin's main concern is, of course, that Turkey shall close the Dardanelles to the warships of the West. Is this necessarily inconsistent with the pact concluded with Britain and France? We do not know its terms in detail, but its general effect is to enlist the Turks as active belligerents in any measures against an aggressor in the Mediterranean region. In plain words, Turkey would "come in," if Italy fought on the German side. It is, doubtless, one of Stalin's aims also to keep Turkey neutral, if either Russia or Bulgaria or both of them should seek to recover their lost provinces from Roumania. Turkey has to adjust herself to an excessively complicated position. In no circumstances dare she make an enemy of Russia. Yet she desires the friendship of the West, which pays cash down in money and territory. From France she has got Aleppo, and she would enjoy taking the Dodecanese from Italy. But to be neutral in one sea and militant in the other might not be possible for ever.

A New Monroe Doctrine

On the initiative of the United States the conference in Panama of the Foreign Secretaries of all the American republics has adopted a remarkable extension of the Monroe Doctrine. It is to stretch the definition of territorial waters one hundred times. All belligerent activities are to be forbidden within a "safety belt" round the coasts of the two Americas at least 300 miles wide. Canadian waters will be excepted, but the belt will swell to 600 miles so as to include the Caribbean Sea. It is contemplated that the fleets of all the American States will collectively police this belt. But can they do it effectively? If not, can they forbid Great Britain and France, which both possess American territory, to carry on "belligerent activities" for the protection of their own commerce? By way of making the new Doctrine palatable to Latin America, the United States proposes to grant sundry favours, including loans and marketing facilities, to States which stand to lose heavily by the sudden cessation of their considerable trade with Germany. An indirect effect of the war may thus be a

General Farlon

consolidation of all America, both in the political and in the economic fields, under the leadership of Washington.

The War Chronicle

During the past week the war has been actively prosecuted only at sea. The outstanding event is the sinking of the freighter *Clement*, some seventy miles from the Brazilian coast. It was at first reported that an armed merchantman performed this feat, but it is now believed that the enemy ship was the pocket-battleship *Admiral von Scheer*. These swift and heavily armed vessels could work great havoc, for the range of their guns would enable them to attack a convoy with a minimum of risk to themselves. The Germans, meanwhile, have sent a circular note to America and other neutrals warning their shipping to avoid "improper behaviour," more especially in the vicinity of England or France. Scandinavian shipping continues to suffer severely in the Baltic from ruthless submarine warfare. Thus the Danish ship *Vendia*, which carried only ballast, was torpedoed without warning while her captain was asking the submarine for orders, and thereafter shelled with the loss of eleven lives. Eight neutral ships have been torpedoed and eight sunk by mines or bombs since the outbreak of war. But on a single day last week at a single point in the Baltic, eight Scandinavian ships were captured. The Swedes are now organising a convoy system, but even in territorial waters their merchantmen are still being attacked. On the high seas, however, the submarine menace is yielding to our defensive measures, and during the week ending October 3rd, no British ship was sunk by a U-boat. Mr. Chamberlain summed up French operations on the Western Front, by stating that useful points for observation had been secured. France is more active on the home front, where M. Daladier is following up his suppression of the Communist Party by a threat to remove the parliamentary immunity of the deputies faithful to Stalinism. Questionable tactics, these, for a democracy at war!

Interest Rates and War Finance

The vital importance of keeping interest rates low has been stressed again by Mr. Keynes in a further letter to the *Times*. As Mr. Keynes points out, it will cost the same annual charge to borrow £1,500 millions at 2½ per cent., £1,280 millions at 3 per cent., and £1,000 millions at 4 per cent.—assuming a sinking fund of one-half per cent. compound. In Mr. Keynes's words, "the gain of borrowing at 3 per cent. rather than 4 per cent. is greater than the whole of the proceeds of the new rates of taxation in a full year"—for the Chancellor's new taxes are estimated to yield £107 millions this year, and £226 millions, apart from the uncertain factor of the tax on excess profits, in a full year. Mr. Keynes's conclusion is that the least damaging method of financing the war will be to pay the rate of interest firmly at 2½ per cent. The existing forms of taxation, as we pointed out last week, are obviously incapable of being stretched to cover more than a small fraction of our war expenses; and, if interest rates are allowed to rise, it will be totally impossible to prevent an inflation of incomes with a consequent rise in prices that will upset all calculations and produce internal dislocations that are bound to lead to serious unrest. Mr. Keynes's views appear to have shocked a number of eminent economists; but they appear to us to be common sense.

The Trade Unions and the Government

The Trade Union Congress, in addition to demanding Trade Union representation on the inner councils of the Ministry of Supply and on the various "controls" for particular materials and services, is pressing Mr. Chamberlain for a share in determining every aspect of wartime economic policy. The Trade Unions are meeting the Minister of Labour in an endeavour to draw up plans for the control of the supply of labour—including "dilution" and "substitution"—by means of bodies on which they will be represented together with the employers and the Government authorities concerned. They are at the same time pressing for representation on the local Food Committees throughout the country, and for full participation in the control of the rationing of food and fuel. Up to the present, the Unions have in general refrained from pressing large wage-demands—though the shipbuilders have received small advances and the miners are now negotiating nationally with the colliery owners. These, however, are both groups in which the case for advances is exceptionally strong, apart from any increase in the costs of living. In general, the policy of the Unions is bound to depend on the effectiveness with which prices are controlled and profiteering checked. They would sooner have effectively controlled prices than wage-increases that might speedily be more than neutralised. But, unless the Government clarifies its price policy, a move for higher wages will become unavoidable.

Education in Wartime

The Bill to postpone the raising of the school-leaving age to fifteen had its second reading on Tuesday. On the same day, the President of the Board of Education announced that the Board would accept new responsibilities for the physical and social welfare of adolescents, and that a committee was being set up to advise it in this matter, in view of the suspension of the work of the National Fitness Council. We should be less concerned at the suspension of the higher leaving age if the general policy of the Government showed any concern for the maintenance of education under war conditions. But, as matters stand, the provision for the schooling of evacuated children is fantastically inadequate, and for the children who remain in most of the evacuated areas, or have returned to them, there appears to be no provision at all. Secondary education is also in a state of chaos; and the arrangements for calling up men for the armed forces, as well as the methods used in commandeering University buildings, threaten to bring all University education of males, except for medical students, very nearly to a standstill within a few months. Where young men are told that they may be called up practically at once, but may not be needed for months, they cannot be expected to be in a mood to work; nor can the Universities devise any workable system of teaching or examination. There ought to be set up without delay a strong educational advisory committee, representing all branches of education and powerful enough to help the Board of Education to stand up to the military authorities and the Office of Works, which has its full share in the existing muddle.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.
POSTAGE on this issue is: Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1½d.; Canada, 1d.

AN ECONOMIC GENERAL STAFF

IT is an old saying that "an army marches upon its belly"; but in these days it would be nearer the truth to say that modern armies march upon the bellies of the whole people. The problems of military and civilian supply are inextricably tangled up together, not only because civilians, as well as soldiers, have to be fed, clothed, and if possible kept in good cheer by maintaining the supply of amenities and amusements, but also because it is impossible to control the supply of goods required by the Government for the public services without controlling civilian requirements at the same time. Raw materials, shipping space to carry them where they are imported, railway and road facilities for distributing them at home, must be allocated on some principle between military and civilian needs; and, in order to achieve this in a satisfactory way, the military especially must be prevented from requisitioning more than they really require. It is an undoubted habit among the War Offices of the world to pitch their demands high, and not to take much pains in avoiding wastage as long as they are supplied with more than enough.

These considerations make it indispensable that the effective control of supplies should rest with a body at the same time powerful enough to stand up to the military authorities and knowledgeable enough to arrive at a correct estimate of the relative urgency of different demands for each of the essential materials and the finished goods made out of them. Under our present organisation of war-time supplies, the main responsibility appears to be divided between two central departments—the Ministry of Supply and the Ministry of Food. But both these departments appear to consist in practice of a large number of separate "controls," each with its own administration; and these "controls" are scattered all over the country in such a way as to make central co-ordination of their activities very difficult. Moreover, side by side with the national "controls" dealing with particular commodities there are regional "controls" with a more general commission; and the relations between the central departments, their regional officers, and the separate commodity "controls" appear, so far, to be ill-defined.

Doubtless the main reason for the scattering of the "controls" over the country and for the adoption of a regional system of organisation side by side with the national system is mainly the danger that an administration centralised in London might become badly disorganised in the event of successful air raids on the capital. But, even if this is a sound reason for dispersing the "controls," it only makes the need greater for a really strong and effective co-ordinating body, capable of keeping in order both the controllers of particular commodities and services and the military and other public agencies which make demands on the supplies which are at the controllers' disposal. It seems, however, clear enough that at present no such body exists. The War Cabinet, consisting mainly of departmental ministers who have plenty to do in their own departments—to say nothing of their principal function of carrying on the war in its political aspects and controlling in consultation with the soldiers the major strategy of military operations—is obviously incapable of acting as an efficient co-ordinator of economic activities. It would be incapable of this even if its members possessed any competence for the task—which they do not. As soon as the personnel of the War Cabinet was announced, it was evident that, whatever it was meant to be, it could not possibly be regarded as capable of undertaking the functions of an Economic General Staff.

Who, then, is in fact controlling the economic operations of this war, as far as they are being controlled at all? The answer appears, as soon as one looks at the way in which the controlling agencies for the separate commodities and services have been made up. To a much greater extent than in the last war, the Government seems to be working on the principle of inviting the capitalist associations of firms in the various industries to control themselves, subject only to such limitation of profits as may be imposed on them by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

This method of proceeding is, no doubt, in line with the present Government's pre-war record. It is a continuation of the policy of handing over powers to such bodies as the colliery-owners, the Iron and Steel Federation, the shipowners, and other capitalist groups which have been given authority to control production and prices, or to distribute public subsidies, or to impose levies for eliminating "redundant" plant, or what not. The present Government is pre-eminently a capitalist Government, and almost its one idea in matters of economic policy has been to endow the big capitalist associations and combines with authority over the consumers.

This policy, highly questionable in peacetime, is likely to be sheerly disastrous under the conditions of war. As the Trade Unions and the Co-operative Societies are already pointing out, "controls" administered in the name of the State by the transmogrified leaders of big business are acceptable neither to the workers as producers nor to the mass of the consuming public. Nor is the situation altered even if the decisions of these controllers require the sanction of the Ministry of Supply or the Ministry of Food, and emerge as orders and regulations under the authority of these ministries. For, as we have seen, the Ministers at the head of these departments are not in a position to make their supervision of the separate "controls" effective, both because these are scattered all over England and because they appear to be largely staffed by persons likely to take more notice of what is said by the big capitalist associations than of what is said by a Minister who can know very little about them.

There seems, accordingly, to be a clear need both for overhauling thoroughly the "controls" in charge of particular commodities and services, so as to make them effectively represent public, rather than trade, interests, and for a complete revision of the central machinery for co-ordinating the various "controls" and deciding in cases of conflict between military and other demands. The latter need would best be met by some small body of high authority—a sort of Economic War Cabinet consisting of persons wholly free from departmental responsibilities, and acting directly under the authority of the Prime Minister, parallel with the main War Cabinet itself. Such an Economic War Cabinet would, of course, need to have its own staff, on a scale sufficient to keep it fully and expertly informed about the proceedings of the various "controls." It would be responsible, not merely for

settling disputes when they arose, but for planning the war in its economic aspects, including the problems of supply to the armed forces as well as to the civilian population. The War Office and the Admiralty, as well as the Minister of Food and the heads of the regular home departments, would have to appear before it and argue their claims, and would have to accept its decisions. Furthermore, it would have to deal, from the British side, with those difficult questions of inter-allied supply and allocation of transport facilities which are certain to arise at an earlier stage, if they have not arisen already.

The organisation of the Ministry of Supply is known to be under review at the present moment, and plans are in train for the establishment of a Ministry of Shipping. But there is no sign that the proposed reorganisation is likely to lead to the setting up of any effective agency either for central planning or for making the separate "controls" really representative of the public interest. We note that the shipping correspondent of the *Times*, in declaring the industry's readiness to welcome a Ministry of Shipping, observes that "the appointment of an outstanding shipping man to be Shipping Minister would give confidence to the industry," and so on. No doubt it would. But would such an appointment inspire equal confidence in the public mind? Would even the admission of a few Trade Union representatives to serve on the boards or advisory committees of the various "controls" inspire public confidence? Such appointments ought to be made; but much more is needed if we are to have any assurance that State control is being operated in the public interest, or effectively co-ordinated to form a coherent general economic plan.

Closely bound up with the supply of goods is the problem of the right allocation of labour between alternative uses. On this question, discussions are now proceeding between the Trade Unions and employers' associations and the Ministry of Labour; but these discussions are apparently being kept entirely separate from those which are concerned with the organisation of the supply services. This isolation is surely quite unreal, and certain to break down. The distribution of labour follows logically upon the decisions about what is to be produced; and if the Trade Unions are excluded from the handling of the major problem they will be left helpless in dealing with the secondary one. The control of labour supply is one part of the general problem of wartime economic planning. That too requires the whole mind of a well-chosen Economic General Staff, armed with wide authority and so constituted as to command a wide measure of public confidence.

WARTIME FARMING AND AFTER

ALTHOUGH war is the pruning knife that cuts off the flower of youth and so ensures the survival of the unfittest, yet it can also be the spur to rouse a nation to experiments it would never make in time of peace. The instinct of self-preservation is the mother of the community sense and men at such times will do from fear what can seldom be accomplished from pure idealism or even from common sense. In some directions, therefore, war leaves us with a few pennyworth of gain from our pound note of misery and beastliness.

It is not surprising that agriculture, that must continue the same essential function in war as in peace, has as good hope as any large industry of preserving some gain from the wreckage. The main thing now is to feed as many people as possible from our soil as economically as possible. Already considerable clearings have been made in the jungle of extravagant waste that had grown round our food system. We have, for instance, established by the stroke of a Government Order the principle of only one delivery of milk a day, although this was one of the principles of the discarded Milk Bill that made some M.P.s shake in their political seats. It is to be hoped that never again will the ordinary milk consumer be compelled to subsidise an unnecessarily and absurdly elaborate milk service.

Very shortly, when we market our fat stock, the owner will arrange by letter or telephone for their transmission to the market, and, if too many beasts are likely to be offered, he will be requested to retain them for a day or two until the market can absorb them. On arrival, the animals will be examined by independent graders, paid for by grade and sent for slaughter. The method avoids middlemen's commissions and profits, renders the presence at market of the sender superfluous, makes a buyers' ring impossible, rewards quality and eliminates the chanciness of marketing when the sender is completely in the dark regarding other supplies to the market. Exactly the same system may not be applicable in time of peace, but at least it gives an opportunity to consider marketing principles that may have considerable possibilities for the farmer. Lord Addison has assessed these possibilities, in terms of money wasted in inefficient cattle marketing, at £2 per beast or say £3,000,000 a year. It is difficult to believe that the farmers will learn nothing from this more direct method of converting live stock into meat. These are merely two examples of experiments in reducing the spread, which is admittedly too wide, between the price the producer receives and that which the public pay.

But we are also doing things that affect the land itself in a way that Governments have not dared attempt in peacetime. Committees have been set up in every county to see that the land is properly farmed and used. The State can now banish from the soil the occupier who wilfully neglects it, and even if neglect is not wilful but springs from force of circumstances, it is doubtful if such an occupier would be allowed to plead hard luck indefinitely. We must now use the soil to feed ourselves and to feed the stock we keep on it, and the whole artificial system of maintaining a large live stock population on feeding stuffs grown on foreign lands—a system that turns the farmer into a mere processer of raw materials grown by sweated labour overseas—is challenged to its very foundation by the exigencies of war and hampered trade routes.

No one can doubt that the effect of this on the health of the soil, health of the stock and the security of the farm in times of economic distress is highly beneficial. "I only recognise as a farmer," ran a notice on the wall behind the desk of Herr Darré, German Minister of Agriculture, "the man who grows his own feeding stuffs." We need not disdain to learn from our enemies, and our system of cramming hundreds of pigs into huts, thousands of hens into boxes like wire chests of drawers and using our worn out pastures as mere exercising grounds for cattle while we cram tons of imported fodder down their throats has resulted in neglected land, disease-ridden stock and a farming population exposed to every economic blast that affects the price of grain in any part of the world. So ignorant of the arts of farming have many of our farmers become through this lazy, mass production system that some are actually wondering now whether they should not kill off their pigs and hens because they can no longer be spoon-fed with foreign fodder. They forget that we used to maintain our own live stock quite successfully before oil cake, concentrates and imported meals were known.

The necessity now to use our soil means that once again, after over twenty years, we are beginning to think of the land as a national asset that must not be dissipated or misused. What a man does with his factory is, to a large extent, his own affair, for if he lets it stand idle or turns it into a racquet

court, another will eventually take its place. But the land is limited, and if it is unused or occupied by those who put its sporting possibilities first, the nation loses that amount of potential food production. Again, the business of war exaggerates the amount of control that is necessary and in peace time it may be less desirable to tell a man he must scrap his chrysanthemums and grow carrots. It is true that in the last war we took similar measures to get rid of the owner or tenant who would not farm his land and then slipped back into the bad old ways again of countenancing any form of neglect. But things had changed before this war. With schemes for the State to give financial aid in improving the landowner's property by restoring its fertility, with a nationalised forestry industry in operation and with a growing consciousness that this was our England that was running to seed in a neglected countryside, we were already well advanced in realising that the State had a responsibility where the land was concerned. Before this war, many people of all political complexions had reached the opinion that nationalisation of agricultural land was not only inevitable but, in the state of affairs that had arisen, desirable. We can hardly escape the conclusion that the action we are taking now will accelerate that process. We may not launch out in a wholesale scheme for acquiring all the land in one stroke; we shall not have any too much ready money to put down, however attractive the investment, when this business is done. But surely at least we shall insist that the State acquires land which owners will not or cannot use in an efficient manner.

In this connection another interesting experiment is taking place. The Minister of Agriculture has very wisely decentralised his powers and made county committees, composed of local people who understand local conditions, responsible for administering the arrangements for ploughing up grassland, sowing with suitable crops and generally acting as his stewards. The executive officers are, for the most part, the county agricultural organisers, who are officials jointly paid and employed by the central government and local authorities. These men had already earned the highest respect. They have won the farmer's confidence, they have practical knowledge, they do not shirk decisions. They have developed quite a different tradition from the Civil Service which, no doubt quite rightly, is so very conscious of its duty never to make a mistake or give a wrong decision and to be anonymous almost to the point of losing the common touch. These are excellent qualities for the administrator of Acts of Parliament, but they would never do for administering the business of farming, for which quick decisions and human understanding are essential. Whether we nationalise the land eventually or whether we merely take steps to see that it is not abused by those who occupy it, some form of public supervision would be required. The war work of the county agricultural organisers will give valuable guidance in this and they may well prove to be the right type to be the State's land agents.

The war will undoubtedly accelerate the new variation of the old system of rotational cropping which has been given the unattractive title of "alternate husbandry." Sir George Stapledon, its high priest, is content to call it lay farming, and if we have time to apply it to the 16 million or so acres of permanent grass and grazings, it will have far-reaching consequences not only upon agriculture but upon our international trade. Price-fixing, both of what farmers sell and what they buy, is another enormous field that wartime regulations have taken in their stride. So far as the future of agriculture immediately after the war is concerned, it may be the most important of all, for it was the hectic price rises and agricultural profiteering of the last war that was one of the chief causes of the ten-year depression that descended upon farming afterwards. The more agriculture is in a position to change over smoothly to peace time conditions when the war ends, the better will be its chance to consolidate the ground it is now winning. High prices all round are the farmers' worst enemy. But these are subjects that must be dealt with in later articles.

L. F. EASTERBROOK

A LONDON DIARY

MME. TABOUIS has made too many prophecies to be always credible, but when she said the other day that Hitler might declare Germany another Union of Soviet Republics, I pricked up my ears. Could such an audacious prophecy be made altogether without reason? My information from Germany now points in this direction. I should expect in the course of the next few weeks a purge of those elements in the Nazi Party and the Army which cannot easily co-operate with the U.S.S.R. In different circumstances there was obviously a chance that these elements might have defeated him, but to-day Hitler has just pulled off a lightning victory and is at least temporarily a god whose word, one presumes, is law. If this is the position the relations between Germany and Russia may become very close. In his brilliant broadcast the other night, Mr. Churchill said that the U.S.S.R. was a riddle wrapped up in a mystery enveloped in an enigma, but he prophesied that Russian national interest would prevent Stalin helping Hitler past a certain point. I hope he is right, but I am by no means sure. It seems probable, if the war is long drawn out on the Western Front, that the two economic systems will be blended, and all the calculations made about Germany not being able to afford to buy Russian commodities, and Russia not having much surplus to sell to Germany, will be falsified. Those calculations are mainly founded on a peacetime basis. Under pressure of war German experts would go to Russia and I see reports that they are already doing so in considerable numbers. Russia could adapt her production in ways to suit the joint war purposes. Transport would be more difficult, but there are ways of getting tankers for oil and other means of communication would be improvised without great delay. This is a gloomy picture. It may turn out wrong. Stalin and Hitler may quarrel; theoretically at least there may be great difficulties in obtaining this co-operation amongst peoples who have been so long taught to hate each other, but as both groups will have obvious advantages from the bargain and both will be told that they are avoiding war with each other, I think the ideological problem can be overcome. Both Stalin and Hitler have shown their power already to manage a violent shift of public opinion.

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Clearing the undergrowth is all very well in its way; but if you are in a thick forest and want to see the sky you must fell some of the taller trees. The trouble with the Ministry of Information is not so much that the passage of news is obstructed by a thick undergrowth of subordinate officers, but that many of the tall trees are in the wrong positions. Yet I am informed that the reorganisation that is now in progress is confined to the subordinate sections of the Ministry. To put the entire regional staff under notice to quit is a measure of economy rather than efficiency; and I heard from one regional officer that he first heard of his dismissal on the wireless. Nothing will be achieved unless the bottle-necks and misfits at the top are changed. What the Ministry needs above all else is someone to think out policy at the top. Good subordinates may be lost, not because there is not plenty to do, but because their work is rendered impossible by delays, changes and hesitations above. There is no real co-ordination, and some of the twelve divisional chiefs, though excellent men in their way, are not in the right places. Incidentally, Sir Kenneth Lee, who knows as much about export trade as anyone, would seem a natural member of the Ministry of Economic Warfare; he has now a job connected with radio, about which, I think, he can scarcely be a specialist. The decentralisation of censorship is a doubtful experiment; journalists are bitterly wondering how they will manage to find their way when hurrying from one Whitehall Department to another in the winter black-out.

* * *

The All-India Congress Manifesto which was discussed in the leading article in this journal last week is probably

one of the most important documents of our time. Gandhi and Nehru are united with a vast body of opinion behind them. They are holding conversations with the Viceroy; they have used the plainest words to remind Britain that the old imperial language will no longer go down in India. They ask for nothing unreasonable. India sent an army to Europe in the last war; this time the " mild Hindu " asks for what cause he is expected to sacrifice his life and if the war for freedom means freedom for India. He reasonably asks for a genuine pledge that India is to be a free country; he asks, for instance, for " authority at the centre " as an immediate step. What course the conversations are taking I do not, of course, know, but the reports that reach me are by no means optimistic. The All-India Congress Committee, which was to meet on the 7th to consider the Government's reply, has been postponed until the 9th; if no reply has been received by the 9th the situation will be very serious. It would be a mistake to dismiss the suggestion of civil disobedience as bluff.

* * *

In the characteristic letter from Bernard Shaw, which is printed in this issue, G. B. S. refers to a letter by H. G. Wells in the *Times* of September 26th. I am not very sure that Wells will like the reference, because it might lead some people into thinking that he agreed with Bernard Shaw. Actually his letter was about the need for a positive war aim to create a new world and his fears that we should muddle into something even less effective than the League of Nations. One of the ghastly features of our present situation is that the British Government has always been completely oblivious of the root causes of war or of the great changes that inevitably must come about in the world. Because they have not been brought about by sane people, they are happening madly. Instead of a new economic order based on federation, we are getting totalitarianism. Sir Stafford Cripps makes a good contribution to the discussion in the current issue of the *Tribune*. He says it is obviously impossible for us merely to accept a Russian-German ultimatum. It is equally clear that we must not blankly turn it down and that " to repeat the statements that have already been made with regard to Poland will be to invite the maximum danger of our being faced in the future with a Russian-German joint attack." He wants us to put forward a positive counter-proposal, demanding freedom for minorities in Europe on condition that we ourselves offer to make all colonies international. This, he says, will provide the maximum chance of divorcing Russia from Germany and will bring world opinion to our side.

* * *

Talking of Sir Stafford Cripps, I am not surprised that he has refused to seek readmission to the Labour Party on Transport House's terms. The Party Executive did not limit itself to demanding that Sir Stafford should agree " to accept the constitution, programme, principles and policy of the party." That would have been common usage. But this is but one of three demands. The second is that he should express regret for his past sins. On this Sir Stafford can hardly be expected to agree; how can he say that he was wrong in urging the Labour Party to put itself at the head of a progressive combination powerful enough to get rid of the present Government? The third is that he should promise " to refrain from conducting, or taking any part in, campaigns in opposition to the declared policy of the party." This demand, as he points out, could be interpreted to prevent him from attempting to change the party's policy. The sting is in the tail of his answer where he suggests that all this party pedantry seems inappropriate when the skies are falling in.

* * *

If you study carefully the demarcation line between Russian Poland and German Poland you will see that considerable cunning has gone to the drawing of it; and I think the cunning was mostly on the Russian side. It is true that the Soviet has been unwise enough to take some small but undeniably Polish districts; true too that Germany has the most highly developed areas. But the Russian area is in general one in which the inhabitants can be attached to the new Government easily, and the German area one where this is impossible. I do not mean nationally, but economically. In 1920 Poland was a land of huge estates and starving, landless peasants. We think of it as still being so, but that is not true. A radical law of 1920 and a less radical law of 1925 have been breaking up the big estates. 200,000 hectares a year had compulsorily to be sold, and though landowners' sabotage often prevented that figure being reached the laws have been applied, and since 1935 applied fairly steadily. 800,000 families have benefited and the so-called " dwarf " farms had been partly eliminated. That is quite a number of persons, even in Poland. But the rearrangement of land has gone overwhelmingly further in the West, where the Germans are, than in the East. Here the great marshes and forests for huntin' and shootin' (with jolly Marshal Göring for one's guest if one was frightfully lucky) have been obstinately preserved and the peasant kept down. As a result, he often did not know or care if he was Pole, White Russian or Ukrainian, but when told to hang the landlord and his bailiff was only too glad and grateful. The great landlords will never come back there. But what can the Germans offer their peasants, who are high enough up in the social scale to know they are Poles and be proud of it? Nothing, except perhaps to reduce mortgages (which they probably can't afford) and a free licence to kill Jews.

* * *

He was a fat heavy man and his jump on to an island in the middle of Tottenham Court Road was quite spectacular. I looked at the fast moving car, which just missed him by inches. It was labelled " casualty service."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Richard M. Titmuss.
All cuttings should be addressed to " This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

When you come to think of it, it is a great honour to be chosen by God to be His ally in so great a contest.—Canon C. Morgan Smith, in *Stevenage Church Magazine.*

The complaint of another householder was that his small daughter was " picking up " swear words from a boy evacuee billeted in the house and repeating them. He asked that the boy and another evacuee should be moved, but his appeal was dismissed, after the investigating officer had said that the words were not swear words but words which were not nice. —*Eastbourne Gazette.*

More passengers to be allowed to stand: Concession made by Minister of Transport.—*Birmingham Post.*

The large number of women who walk about Richmond in " slacks " has raised the wrath of the Richmond Women's Conservative Association. Addressing members of the Town Ward, Mrs. Arthur Shadwell said, " I think it is perfectly disgraceful, and it is lowering the prestige of British women. For girls who are not doing war work to go about like it, I think it is disgusting, and what is worse, they insist upon showing their toes. If they must dress as men, why not wear the whole outfit, with socks and everything else? If men were seen walking the streets in women's clothes they would be arrested. It is a pity some of these girls are not taken to task."—*Barnes and Mortlake Herald.*

" Though Mars dominates the world of today, and Spirits satanic cause anxiety and gloom, yet the joy of life springs ever anew at the magical touch of Puck . . . Gnawing Worry and dark Pessimism soon vanish as Puck trips gaily by, ever singing in his inimitable British way, " Cheer-i-o! Cheer-i-o! Cheer-i-o-o!"—*Folkestone and Hythe Day-by-Day.*

BAD WORDS

IT has been reported—I do not know with what authority—that the B.B.C. has removed the ban on jokes that might be regarded by the Nazi leaders as insulting, and that a Lancashire comedian is now permitted to call Herr von Ribbentrop anything within the bounds of decency that comes into his head. I doubt whether this will greatly add to the exhilaration of the British public. There is not much fun in flinging words of abuse at some one whom you cannot see and who is almost certain not to hear you. Obviously, it brings release to the soul to hurl opprobrious epithets at some one within hailing distance: otherwise children—even beautifully behaved children—would not make so free with the words "Pig," "Beast," "Brute" and the rest of the bad language of the nursery. But only a morbid-minded child could sit alone in a room and mutter "Pig!", "Beast!", or "Brute!" with satisfaction about an absent friend.

If the friend is present, however, and you are having a quarrel with him, how satisfying is a well-aimed *mot juste!* Even "Ass!" is a word not to be despised. "Pig!" however, is better, and "Coward!" is an insult that suits nearly any occasion. So far as I can remember my childhood, if a boy hit you, you called him a coward, and, if he showed no signs of wanting to hit you, you called him a coward. If you ran away from him in terror, you shouted "Coward!" at him as you ran. Again, in those pre-feminist days, if he struck the most powerful representative of the female sex in the company, a universal shout of "Coward!" went up. There is something courage-giving, apparently, in calling somebody else a coward. After all, even many grown-up people do it in wartime. Many of them on all sides denounced their enemies as cowards during the last war. To believe that somebody you do not like is a coward is one of the few happy illusions that survive childhood. As a child, I myself, not being much of a hero, preferred "Murderer!" As, with temper lost, I shouted: "You're a murderer! You're nothing but a murderer!" I could feel the bristles rising in my mane.

The only section of Europeans who still take an infantile pleasure in using unseemly language about people they do not like appears to be the propaganda department of the Nazi party. There are plenty of instances of calling names in other countries, no doubt, but nobody else sets to work doing so quite so gloatingly as some of the Nazis. Consider that admirable Nazi broadcast a week or so ago about Mr. Churchill having a meal in the House of Commons restaurant. "There he sits," cried the broadcaster, "with his glass of port in front of him, and his big cigar, with a bloody red steak in front of him, which he puts into his mouth in big pieces and chews and talks until the blood trickles down the side of his mouth. Mr. Churchill has been eating raw blood for 50 years." It is, of course, only a variant of the childish insult "Beast!" but its composition must have made somebody deliriously happy. A still later broadcast on Mr. Churchill seems tame and unsatisfying in comparison. "A selfish, callous, nauseating adventurer—nothing but the paid minion of international finance," "This proud, roaring strutting humbug"—I must say I prefer the picture of Mr. Churchill going for an underdone steak.

I sometimes wonder whether the present era will be remembered as—among other things—the period of the Great Renaissance, the renaissance of bad language. Bad language has certainly crept—nay, careered—back into literature, and I doubt whether its use was ever more widespread in the conduct of international arguments. It would not be surprising nowadays to hear a statesman described by an enemy propagandist as a "— —" or a "— —." It is said even of an anti-Churchill broadcast the other day that "it was of such a nature that no reputable paper could publish it." We are getting far away from the innocent days when a public man was content to call an opponent "Liar!", "Beast!", or "Dirty dog!" "Oh, you dirty dog!" cried a member of the House of Commons to the heir to a peerage; "oh, you dirty, dirty dog!" How shocking it seemed at the time! Yet how almost charming in its simplicity it seems to-day, now that we are well into the Goebbels era of vituperation.

In one respect, however, the new fashion to my mind deserves encouragement. It is more imaginative than the old way of simply calling people liars and fools and asses. It leaves room for a Falstaffian richness of vocabulary. The Nazi propagandists might do worse than study the interchange of epithets between Falstaff and Prince Henry in *Henry IV*. There is a flavour in them that is lacking even in the fairly vigorous phrases which were last year put on the banned list by the Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives. Yet some of the New Zealand phrases were distinctly good. I like, for example: "The face of the Honourable Member reminds me of a great cheese out of which a yokel has taken a great bite." Insults to the personal appearance are among the best of all insults. "Porridge-face," "Potato-face," "Turnip-nose," "Elephant's-ears"—the proceedings of the Parliaments of the world would undoubtedly be more fully reported in the newspapers if members went in more for this sort of argument. What joy there must have been in the newspaper offices of New Zealand when one member said of another that he had "a nose so long that he trips over it!" Even the shout "Look in the mirror and see a donkey" must have made the New Zealand House of Representatives seem for the moment as gay as a nursery.

"A giggling monkey" is also juvenile, but only a grown-up M.P. could have thought of "blow-fly minded" or "a blasted lot of Shylocks." These are more in the tradition of Daniel O'Connell when he said of Lord Alvanley: "There is a creature half idiot, half maniac, in another place," and described him as a "bloated buffoon."

It is a curious fact—if it is a fact—that in England the House of Commons has always shown itself more imaginative in its use of abusive language than the House of Lords. I doubt whether within living memory any peer has ever described a peer on the other side of the House as "a dirty, contemptible little rat" or a Cabinet Minister as "a lying scoundrel." If all the peers were hereditary peers tracing their descent back to the Plantagenets, one might imagine that this lack of vim was a mark of decadence and that, owing to an excess of blue blood, their red blood had all but disappeared. But there are plenty of peers without a drop of blue blood in their veins—peers who come from the same hardy stock as the majority of the members of the House of Commons. Can it be, then, that the pure atmosphere of the House of Lords is due to the devitalising effects of a public school education? We are often told that the public-school system wipes all originality out of its victims, and, as most of the peers have been at public schools, this may account for the lack of colour in their use of the English tongue. They do not seem even to want to call each other liars. Or are they all, as a result of their dumbness, suffering from fearful repressions? I should like to hear someday of a peer telling another peer exactly what he thought of his face and features. If unable to invent anything original himself, he might borrow that bit from the New Zealand M.P. about the great cheese out of which the yokel had taken a great bite.

Still, however, hard they try, Englishmen, whether peers or commoners, will have a long way to go before they catch up with the Nazis in the use of insulting speech. To be effectively and supremely and vulgarly insulting, you must for the moment be filled with hatred, and Englishmen are relatively slow to hatred. Herr Hitler is of the opinion that hatred is a great help towards winning a war, but the last war was not won by the side that hated most. I have heard few expressions of hatred of the Nazi leaders since the beginning of the present war. Herr Hitler himself is regarded as a nuisance or a lunatic rather than as an object of hatred. Dr. Goebbels is not much liked, but he is looked on chiefly as an unconscious comedian. As for General Göring, many people

speak of him as if, were he not a Nazi, he might be rather a good sort. But no Englishman writes of any of these leaders with a joy of hatred that the Nazi broadcasters show in speaking of Mr. Churchill. Herr Hitler is not savagely portrayed as a glutton for haricot beans, nor have we descriptions of General Göring tearing an uncooked pheasant limb from limb and eating it, feathers and all. The truth is the " no-hatred-for-the German-people " catchery has kept the atmosphere in England fairly sane—sane enough, certainly, to enjoy the insults to English statesmen that are bawled over the wireless and, not least, the picture of Mr. Churchill behaving like a wild beast over his food. Y. Y.

STILL I'LL BE PRIME MINISTER

(To the tune of " The Vicar of Bray ")

In World Appeasement's golden days
I led the British nation
By devious diplomatic ways
To reconciliation;
I strained to keep the world from war
According to my plan, Sir,
But found the German Chancellor
Was not a gentleman, Sir.

The Peace-Front next I patronized
With wondrous expedition,
A course *ad nauseam* advised
By Labour's Opposition;
My Peace-Front, nipped by Russian frost,
Was destined not to be, Sir,
But England never, never lost
Full confidence in me, Sir.

Though once I gave aggression's hand
A friendly Tory pressure,
To-day with Socialists I stand
To fight the armed aggressor.
And since all Parties must concur
Till Europe's wrongs are righted,
I still shall be Prime Minister
To lead a land united.

These transpositions bold and deft
Are my peculiar glory,
Which make the purpose of the Left
The programme of the Tory;
And though Great Britain's leftward bent
To some seem dark and sinister,
Whatever be our Government
I'll still remain Prime Minister.

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

WAR ON THE HOME FRONT

Everyone is aware of the social revolution which is taking place in the countryside as a result of the exodus from crowded centres. The story of the derelict areas in the large towns has not yet been told. I am writing about a typical working-class area near the centre of London. The district is partly industrial, partly residential, and is to some extent dependent on the commercial houses of the City and West End. After a month of war it is beginning to resemble the Rhondda Valley. The queues outside the Labour Exchanges are reminiscent of 1919–21: men, women, boys, and girls are out of work. Most of the small shops have closed down. Many of the large offices have moved out of town, taking all but a skeleton staff with them. In one building there were 4,000 employees before the outbreak of war; there are now 50. Much has been said of the misfortunes of the Bloomsbury landladies, but no one has mentioned their cooks and char-women, all of whom are out of work. Some of the factories have closed: others are working short hours. The only new industry is the making of respirator-containers, but when these have been supplied, with the required range of puce, petunia and hyacinth shades for women, presumably more factories will close.

About 25 per cent. of the population has left the district: the percentage was, of course, much higher in the first week of the war. A few mothers with small children are still away and their husbands are miserable and pathetic men.

Wretchedly they wrestle with the problems of housekeeping, shopping, cooking, cleaning, and laundry, some of them plunging each week more deeply into debt and dirt. They are generally unselfish men, whose wives are delicate or partly crippled, or who feel it specially important for their babies to remain in the country. But most of the women are back, and trying to cope with the problems of winter clothing for the children, less money to manage on, and rising prices. Clothing is a big item. At home it can be bought as it is needed, sometimes second-hand. Old clothes will do for every day. But it is a very different thing when the children are visitors in other people's homes. Self-respect demands a much higher standard, and the whole winter's outfit has to be provided at once, including Wellingtons and an adequate supply of sleeping suits. Parents miss the children unbearably, and often bring them back for no other reason than that life is too wretched in a silent tidy house. The usual rationalisation is that it is better for the whole family to die together if their " name is on the bomb."

So week by week the children return. There is no school for them: schools are first-aid posts, fire stations, or, in the case of church schools, mortuaries. New games have been invented. Sandbag ramparts are good to climb on, but even better to pull down. The method is to slit open the lower ones and let the sand out. Then the whole edifice, its foundation gone, sags and staggers, and must be taken down and rebuilt. When it is dark the game changes. Small houses are raided, dustbin lids and pieces of Anderson shelters are dragged away, the lids are thrown high into the air, to fall with a terrifying clatter on to the corrugated steel. In the passages leading to the air-raid shelters peashooters are used to break electric light bulbs or hurricane lamps are removed. In this utter darkness the play becomes more serious. Boys and girls flirt in corners, while the younger ones smash windows, uproot plants, and throw stones at passers-by. The spice in all this devilment is the helplessness of authority; such persons as caretakers, air-raid wardens, and policemen are almost powerless: escape is so easy. Probably the excitement will die down in bad weather, but already the stupid, bullying type of gangster is seizing his opportunity and fun will change to crime. Partly because there are fewer amusements and partly because the atmosphere of public houses is often more cheerful than that of private houses, boys of seventeen and eighteen are drinking heavily, some of them for the first time.

There was some gaiety at the beginning of the war. But the natural fun, which persisted even in the first days of acute misery and fear, is giving way to gloom, a gloom so alien to the Cockney that, if this is the prevailing mood after one month of war, the future is black indeed. Boys are waiting to be called up; some reservists have gone, but so far very few. How long are the children to be away, the mothers want to know. A few weeks in the country is doing them good, and Sunday visits are something to look forward to, but already Sunday visits mean debt—arrears of rent, of weekly payments for furniture and wireless sets, clothing clubs and insurances. Is it better to bring the rest of the children back and live in fear of air-raids, or to face this bleak life, which every day is duller and more difficult? When family life is broken up there seems so little to live for. In twenty years

the men who fought the war to end war have begun to believe that there was a fuller and better life for their children. In spite of many setbacks they have achieved a higher standard of living, and a far higher standard of housing. Many of them live in convenient and pleasant modern flats with hot water and electric equipment and good windows. Now there is neither money nor coal for the hot water; lights must be dimmed and electric consumption cut down; windows covered with black paper or heavy curtains. The gardens are trampled and ruined, intersected by trenches. And what is the use of the finest flat or house without the money to pay for it? What about the people who still live in slums; if rebuilding begins again what will be the relation between rents and a working-man's income after the ruin of another war? It has not taken long to put the hands of the clock back: when shall we put them on again?

IRENE T. BARCLAY

THE IVORY SHELTER

A CONTROVERSY has already begun about what people ought to read in wartime. It is more important to know what people ought to write. I know that one cannot advise genius, that it is above the struggle, but most writers are without genius, and it is a function of criticism to hearten them, and help them to avoid mistakes.

As human beings artists are less free now than they have ever been; it is difficult for them to make money and impossible for them to leave the country. Lock-up is earlier every day, and they are concentrated indefinitely on an island from which the sun is hourly receding. As human beings they are no longer emotionally free, for the infection of war induces mental symptoms which indicate the discomforts and torments to follow.

But in the last few weeks two tyrannies have been overthrown, two yokes which many of our artists bore have been thrown off: the burden of anti-Fascist activities, the subtler burden of pro-Communist opinions.

It is a quality of an artist to be more imaginative and more truthful than his fellow-men. For years this greater sensibility and objectivity have wrecked themselves in political causes, and forced political realities on many who would have been stronger exempt from them. The writers with the deepest sense of humanity have expended and often wasted that sense in the hopeless struggle for Manchurians, Abyssinians, Austrians, Spaniards, Chinese and Czechs. What they could say, they have said, what they could feel, they have felt, and no historical change has resulted. Yet there has been one result, a war which was inevitable may have been precipitated, and writers now live in a world no longer political but military. The fight against Fascism is in the hands of the General Staff, and there is no further use for the minor prophet. In short, all artists who are not in the fighting forces, or engaged in active propaganda, are now escapists, their task of making their country conscious of the forces at work in the world is in abeyance. They have made plain what they thought, and, if they were to go on saying it, they would not always find it printed.

Thus one excellent counsel I could give to writers would be: keep off the war. Nothing they can write will do much to win it, and a large collection of second-hand expressions and clichés left over from Spain and Abyssinia forms the vocabulary with which they will have to work. When, two years ago, several hundred writers answered a questionnaire on the side they took in the Spanish war, these terms were already threadbare, and now since anti-Fascism has become the official policy of the Government, its vocabulary is utterly frayed. During the last war the escapists carried on a literary renaissance. Joyce wrote *Ulysses* in Trieste and Zurich, Firbank's novels were written in rooms at Oxford, *South Wind* appeared in 1917, and *Eminent Victorians* a year later. Moore, Yeats, Gide, Eliot, Forster, and Virginia Woolf are other writers in whom it is vain to search for a clear definition of our war-aims, an attack on the Prussian beast, or any reference to the last war whatever. In fact, however writers may serve their country as men, war provides them with the opportunity, as artists, to serve themselves. The best modern war literature is pacifist and escapist, and either ignores the war, or condemns it, with the lapse of time. When the war is, like the present one, a gigantic police operation, the writers who helped in detecting the criminal are often made uncomfortable by the forces called in to apprehend him. Where, for instance, are those two recruiting sergeants of the Left, Auden and Isherwood? At a time when many of those whom they have fired are taking part in "to-day the struggle," these veterans of Berlin, Barcelona and the Yang-Tse have settled permanently in America, as if our European war were provincial and dowdy. In this they are not to blame; as the pacifist of yesterday becomes the militant of to-day, so the militant tends to become pacifist. The desire to love and understand life replaces the ambition to fight to alter it. And so the central problem for writers to-day is more still to balance the rights and wrongs of pacifism and self-defence, to explore the causes and the cure of war, that troubled frontier where three kingdoms, Marxism, Psycho-analysis, and Biology meet. The watershed is not yet properly mapped, the source of the lust for power investigated. Can violence ever be justified? Yet can pacifists justify permitting, through their own inaction, the slaughter of other pacifists, with the suppression of those ideals for which other idealists are prepared to fight? And the aggressive instinct? Can it be analysed out of us, and would the will to progress then go with it? Should we try gland injections, or have all Europe weaned, like the Eskimos, at the age of twelve? The Eskimos lack the aggressive instinct; on the other hand, their cultural contribution to Europe is inconsiderable. Yes, for thoughtful artists, there seems only one problem: how to reconcile the necessity for this war with the effects of it.

This question of ends and means brings us back to the one event of importance which affects writers since the war has broken out. The Germans, who for political reasons brought Lenin back to Russia, have let Voroshilov out. The aims of the Red Army are not yet known; it may only restore the Russian pre-war frontiers, it may encourage pan-slavism and throw Germany into our arms, it may socialise Germany and throw the two nations against us, or it may bring the millennium, but whatever it builds, it will have destroyed the Infallibility of the Komintern.

The majority of English writers have liberal instincts. These instincts many of us have subordinated before the advocacy of Communist methods. We have felt a sense of inferiority, viewing the uselessness of liberal opinion as compared to that of an organised Communist action, like the International Brigade. This sense of inferiority at "getting anything done" has extended to other fields, and driven many sympathisers to accept Communist values in literature or theories in art. Now, while Communist energy is unimpeachable, their pretensions to being more right than other people would appear to be shattered. Their leader performs not only acts which they find difficult to justify, but acts which they are unable to predict. They may benefit us in the long run, but the methods are as close to Hitler's as the huge statues on the Russian Pavilion in the Paris Exhibition were to the Colossi on the German one. And it was always the means employed by Communism against which the liberal mind revolted. Their tendency to exalt the will at the expense of the heart, which sets a ruling class apart from its subjects; the aridity of all that obedient thinking; the worship of what is of historical necessity, and the contempt for what might have been; the obstinate intransigence by which Miaja and Azaña were turned into traitors because they gave up a lost war a few days before Negrin and the brawny Pasionaria; the Bogy of the Party Line—all these are discredited, and the sense of relief should generate a new exuberant energy in the creative forces of the Left, more international conception of justice and freedom, and an aesthetic, not a political, approach to art.

For these reasons it would seem that those writers, and they are our best, whose country does not as yet require them, provided they have somewhere to work, and can get enough to eat, are in a wonderful position. "There will be time to murder and create," without considering the "flat ephemeral pamphlet, and the boring meeting," or stabbing a Tractor in the back. The censorship will force them back on the abstract, and the esoteric, on pure technique developing the resources of their thought and feeling. Revolutionary movements will be more spontaneous, anarchists no longer be called uncontrollable, liberals ineffectual, or intellectuals bourgeois. Nostalgia will return as one of the soundest creative emotions, whether it is for the sun, or the snow, or the freedom which the democracies have had temporarily to discontinue. War is a tin-can tied to the tail of civilisation, it is also an opportunity for the artist to give us nothing but the best, and to stop his ears. CYRIL CONNOLLY

THE OAK COPSE

In my copse were growing more than a hundred oaks.
Of these fifty were chosen as ripe for cutting.
When they had all been felled and carried away,
I went to and fro in the woods gathering acorns,
Uprooting baby chestnuts and beech seedlings.
I planted them in my garden; and next Spring
There had sprung up a forest of a hundred infant trees.
When Autumn has come, I mean to dig them up,
Cut their taproots and plant them out in the oak copse,
Two young trees for every oak that was felled.
Then if only the rabbits will have the grace to spare you,
Year after year I shall watch you, my trees, grow taller.
But alas, I can only hope to see you rise
To twice, or at best thrice, my own height.
When I and my poems are long dead and forgotten,
You whom I reared will still be green and tall,
Spreading into leafy homes for the birds, and shadowing
The secret walks of lovers: and maybe a poet,
Stretched on the moss beneath you, and gazing upward
Into the pied loveliness of your foliage—
There shall his heart grow winged and free as a bird
That sings and sings in a carol of tranquil joy.
Then, though his song never shall I hear, though strange
And new to my antique ears would seem its beauty,
Dear trees, I shall have planted you not in vain.

R. C. TREVELYAN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Ignace" at the Berkeley (from Saturday)

This film is described as topical because the hero is a conscript; and the opening scene, which represents the pleasures of medical examination for the Army, is evidently calculated to appeal to men between 20 and 40. But quickly the venerable tradition of Musical Comedy asserts its claims, and we are invited to enjoy once more the allurement of naked thighs and the killingly funny situations caused by mistaken identity and attempts at adultery. The film is nothing but a vehicle for Fernandel. That empty face with long artificial gums so ostentatiously exposed shows all the stigmata of arrested development, and the triumph of the fool over brute strength and superior intelligence is one of the oldest and justest sources of comic pleasure. But some of us, while admiring the malign idiocy of Harpo, and the irrepressible simplicity of Chaplin, find Fernandel displeasing, and, in close-ups, shocking. Such persons will keep away from *Ignace*, and Fernandel fans will excuse the film for the sake of their idol.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, October 7th—
Liszt and Beethoven Recital by Lamond, Wigmore Hall, 3.
SUNDAY, October 8th—
London Symphony Orchestra Concert with Myra Hess, Queen's Hall, 3.
MONDAY, October 9th—
Morley College Classes commence.
"Dear Octopus," Golders Green Hippodrome.
"French for Love," Richmond.
"Heroes Don't Care," Q.
"Romeo and Juliet," Streatham Hill.
"This Man Is News," Everyman Cinema.
TUESDAY, October 10th—
Gordon Stephenson: "The Function of Camps in the National Emergency," Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 1.
"Music at Night," Westminster.
WEDNESDAY, October 11th—
"The Little Dog Laughed," Palladium.

UNCOMMON SENSE ABOUT THE WAR

BY BERNARD SHAW

[Last week, in pursuance of our policy of making the *N.S. and N.* as much an open forum for the free expression of opinion, as is possible in wartime, we published a number of "communications" dealing with the position and policy of the Soviet Union. This week, in pursuance of the same policy, we publish Mr. Bernard Shaw's provocative contribution. Manifestly, we are not to be taken as endorsing the views expressed by our contributors—for we shall leave them free to advocate widely divergent attitudes. Our own opinion on the issues raised by Mr. Shaw will be gathered by our readers from our editorial columns.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE war in Poland is over. Every person in the country capable of seeing three moves ahead in the game of military chess has known this from the moment when the first Russian soldier stepped across the Polish frontier. Poland surrendered and laid herself at Herr Hitler's feet. He was able to say that as Poland's cause is lost we have no further excuse for continuing the war. Whereupon we threw off the mask of knight errantry and avowed flatly that we did not care two hoots about Poland and were out, on our old balance of power lines, to disable Germany, which we now called abolishing Hitlerism.

This left the Führer in a very dangerous position. The Axis had broken in his hands from the beginning, Italy and Spain having promptly deserted him. The anti-Comintern Pact had become a danger to him. Turkey was definitely against him: Rumania and the Balkans generally were mortally afraid of him. America's neutrality was pro-British just as our non-intervention policy in the Spanish war was pro-Franco. 1918 had proved that Germany, though unconquerable and even victorious here and there in the field, could be starved into complete demoralisation and defeat by the Allies. The situation was not pleasant even for a leader drunk with success. The encirclement was fairly complete.

Except on one side, where Russia stood with an army of six million men eating their heads off. Those of us who were intelligent and knowledgeable enough to see that the balance of power was in the hands of Stalin had forced our Government to make overtures to Russia, and Mr. Duff Cooper, a very favourable specimen of our reigning oligarchy, loosened his old school tie so far as to plead in *The Evening Standard* that Stalin, though of course a blood-thirsty scoundrel, was perhaps not quite so villainous as Hitler. Herr Hitler, having the tremendous advantage over Mr. Duff Cooper of being a proletarian and knowing something about the world he was living in, courted Russia more sensibly.

Stalin, five hundred per cent. or so abler and quicker at the uptake than all the dictators, including the Westminster Cabinet, rolled into one, had nothing to consider except which of them he should take by the scruff of the neck. Before deciding, he sent a handful of his six millions to take possession of White Russia, the Ukraine, and a substantial bit of Poland. Herr Hitler at once capitulated unconditionally, and was duly taken by the scruff of his neck; for Stalin could use Herr Hitler to keep Duff Cooperism out of the rest of Poland. He informed us in effect that since we could not even be civil to Russia we should not make Poland a gun emplacement for the obvious ultimate aim of our rulers (as far as they are capable of aims) of restoring the Romanoff Tsardom and once more dining happily with the Benkendorffs in Chester Square. And so the diplomatic situation stands. Nothing has happened since except that the French, whether after consultation with us or not I do not know, have most inopportunely started persecuting their Communists . . . .

Meanwhile we are enduring all the vagaries, from mere dis-

comfort to financial ruin and the breaking up of our homes, of the ineptest Military Communism. Powers which no Plantagenet king or Fascist dictator would dream of claiming have been granted to any unqualified person who offered to assume them, including an enterprising burglar. Whatever our work in life may be, we have been ordered to stop doing it and stand by. Wherever our wives and children are they have been transported to somewhere else, with or without the mothers. Our theatres and cinemas have been closed; and our schools, colleges and public libraries occupied by the military bureaucracy. We have been bundled out of our hotels into the streets neck and crop, and our own houses simultaneously made into nests of billeted little evacuees, often unofficially described as little hooligans. Our bungalows, bought by us after a careful calculation of our ability to pay the mortgage interest and get to our place of business in a Baby Austin, have been put quite beyond our means by an appalling Budget, and by a rationing of petrol which aims at our complete immobilisation just as the blacking-out aims at our being completely blindfolded from sunset to sunrise. When the bungalows and suburbs raise a bitter cry that they cannot pay the new taxes, Sir John Simon replies frankly that if they do not the Government will be forced to resort to inflation, thus reminding us that in Germany, when we forced the Reich to resort to it, a twopenny-halfpenny postage stamp cost £12,000, and the postman's wage rose to a king's ransom on which he could barely live, whilst annuities and insurances, on which unmarried elderly daughters and retired folk used to live in decency and comfort, became worthless. Our incomes depreciated from week to week through the rise in prices which the Government is pledged to prevent and cannot.

Such (and much more) is Military Communism in inexperienced hands, often the hands of fools who come to the top in wartime by their self-satisfied folly though nobody would trust them to walk a puppy in peace time. When we complain we are told that we must all make sacrifices, and that we had better buy white overcoats, carry our gas masks everywhere, and take wildly impracticable precautions against high explosive blast and poison gas.

Naturally we cry "Sacrifice! Yes: but what for?" You tell us to be resolute and determined; but we cannot be resolute and determined in the air about nothing. What are we suffering for? Upon what are we resolved? What have we determined? What in the devil's name is it all about now that we have let Poland go?

Mr. Chamberlain, in reply, states our aim in a peroration. Mr. Winston Churchill echoes it in a broadcast with a certain sense of its absurdity which the microphone betrays. Our aim is first to deliver Europe from the threat and fear of war. And our remedy is to promise it three years more war! Next, to abolish Hitlerism, root and branch. Well, what about beginning by abolishing Churchillism, a proposition not less nonsensical and more easily within our reach? But, we are told, if we do not send Hitler to St. Helena, he will proceed to annex Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Africa, and finally the entire universe and Stalin will help him. I must reply that men who talk like this are frightened out of their wits. Stalin will see to it that nobody, not even our noble selves, will do anything of the sort; and Franklin Roosevelt will be surprised to find himself exactly of Stalin's opinion in this matter. Had we not better wait until Herr Hitler tries to do it, and then stop him with Stalin and Roosevelt at our back?

The Archbishop of York, in the next broadcast, rose finally to the occasion as became a great Christian prelate. Unfortunately he began not as a Christian prelate but as a righteously angry hotheaded Englishman by giving his blessing to our troops as "dedicated" to the supreme immediate duty of lynching Herr Hitler and his associates. Now I cannot go into the question whether Herr Hitler deserves to be lynched without raising awkward analogies between his case and those of Signor Mussolini, General Franco, Stalin and his associates, and raking up events in India and Ireland which unfriendly pens have represented as somewhat dictatorial on our part. I simply remind the Archbishop that though we can easily kill a hundred thousand quite innocent Germans, man, woman and child, in our determination to get at Herr Hitler, we should not finally succeed in lynching him; and the killing of the Germans, and our own losses in the process, would produce a state of mind on both sides which would operate as a complete black-out of Christianity and make the Archbishop's sane final solution impossible. If we won, it would be Versailles over again, only worse, with another war even less than twenty years off. And if, as is desperately possible, we drove Russia and Germany into a combination against us to avert that catastrophe, which is just what our Stalinphobe, Old School Ties and Trade Unionists are recklessly trying to do, then we shall indeed need God's help and not deserve it.

No: it will not do, however thickly we butter it with bunk and balderdash about Liberty, Democracy and everything we have just abolished at home. As the Archbishop nobly confesses, we made all the mischief, we and the French, when we were drunk with victory at Versailles; and if that mischief had not been there for him to undo Adolf Hitler would have now been a struggling artist of no political account. He actually owes his eminence to us; so let us cease railing at our own creation and recognise the ability with which he has undone our wicked work, and the debt the German nation owes him for it. Our business now is to make peace with him and with all the world instead of making more mischief and ruining our people in the process.

I write without responsibility, because I represent nobody but myself and a handful of despised and politically powerless intellectuals capable of taking a catholic view of the situation. One of these unhappy outcasts is my friend, H. G. Wells. He has written a vitally important letter to the *Times*, of which nobody has taken the smallest notice. I disagree with him on one point, and would fain comfort him on it. He warns us that we are risking not merely military defeat, but the existence of civilisation and even of the human race. Dear H.G., let us not flatter ourselves. The utmost we can do is to kill, say, twenty-five millions of one another, and make the ruins of all our great cities show places for Maori tourists.

Well, let us. In a few months we shall matter no more than last summer's flies. As two of the flies we naturally deprecate such an event; but the world will get on without us; and the world will have had an immense gratification of the primitive instinct that is at the bottom of all this mischief and that we never mention: to wit pugnacity, sheer pugnacity for its own sake, that much admired quality of which an example has just been so strikingly set us by the Irish Republican Army.

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Correspondence

WAR AIMS

SIR,—The German and Russian Governments are calling upon France and Britain to make peace. The question to-day is whether France and Britain merely reply that they will not consider peace, or whether they make a constructive offer of such peace terms as will lead to securing the world from a repetition of Fascist aggression.

The central policy to create a new world is the abolition of armaments. We now know by the most bitter experience that the disarmament of one country is not enough. If, after another three years' war and the death of millions, Germany again sued for peace, again we might disarm her. How should we be the safer? Italy would still be armed to the teeth. And can the world keep from war in the next era if France, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union are fully armed? Safety can only come through universal disarmament. Moreover, universal disarmament is likely to be the policy imposed on the ruined nations of Western Europe at the end of a long war by the two great states who will alone remain intact. Soviet Russia proposed disarmament to the world while Germany was still disarmed and democratic, but she was contemptuously disregarded. The Soviet Union has less interest in the preservation of armaments than any country, because she has no private armament manufacturers, and armaments are recognised as nothing but an obstacle to the increase of her prosperity.

Britain must make her desire for an immediate and lasting peace unmistakeable by declaring here and now for the only policy which can check the vile forces and principles to which we stand opposed. All the other things we may be presumed to want would necessarily accompany disarmament. There should be an emancipation of all the races in Europe subjected to alien domination. The Czechs, the Tyrolese, the Poles would have to regain their freedom. There should be emancipation for subject peoples in Africa and self-government for India. There should be a revitalised League of Nations, with definite power to limit the sovereignty of all states in relation to war, and with the duty and resources to restrain aggression and to keep the world disarmed.

This is the sketch of a vast programme. But on some such lines

the world must be rebuilt. Is it to be discussed now by the nations or after millions are murdered and starved in Germany, France and Britain?

CHARLES TREVELYAN

Wallington, Cambo,
Morpeth.

SIR,—The answer which the Government will give to peace proposals now anticipated from Germany is not yet known, but the general answer in the country seems to be an unqualified refusal. I am sure this is neither right nor wise. It is probably quite impossible even with a complete military victory over Germany to reconstitute Poland as it was. Should we not therefore have counter-proposals to offer Germany? I suggest that we should agree to enter a five-power conference provided Germany would agree

(*a*) to establish an independent Poland State;
(*b*) to re-enter, together with Italy, the League and help us to build a new and better League;
(*c*) to join us in setting up through the agency of the League a Court of International Justice and an International Police Force;
(*d*) to join us in sending an urgent and pressing invitation to the United States to join this new League and help us in Europe to build a new world order.

Many people will say it is useless to enter a conference with Hitler since he cannot be trusted, but if you can trust the signatures of four out of five persons in a conference there is a good chance that the fifth will have to keep faith too. Despite Stalin's duplicity over the pact with Germany there was no actual breach of faith, and the post-war record of Russia in keeping her bargains is good. Mussolini, whatever his faults, is probably more reliable than Hitler, and do not forget that it would be greatly in the interests of both Italy and Russia to keep peace. The possibility of Hitler being forced to keep his word is therefore fairly high.

A settlement at this stage of the war would be distasteful to many because so many injustices would still be unrectified in Europe. But can these injustices really be rectified by military force? It is doubtful. A slower but perhaps surer method would be to rely on (*a*) the Court of International Justice, (*b*) the new rulers of Germany whom time must bring.

The fact that Hitler is at last willing to sit at the same conference table as Stalin is a new factor of tremendous importance, and the response of the United States to a joint invitation from the five great powers of Europe might at this stage be favourably received.

If Germany refuses these proposals then I am afraid the war must go on.

D. S. ANDERSON

Birmingham.

SIR,—I should like to congratulate you upon the lead you have taken in connection with war aims, particularly with regard to the democratic rights of colonial peoples. Important points remain with regard to a lasting peace in Europe. It is apparently our intention to return to Poland the fruits of her own aggression but to relieve the rest of Europe of the ever-present threat of German aggression. Apparently both can be done by the destruction of Hitlerism. Obviously this is insufficient even for the latter objective; Hitler is not the only German ruler to have had imperialist ambitions. In a world that accepts imperialism as quite proper the only way to remove a threat of future aggression is to smash a country's war potential, i.e., to cripple its industries. Whilst this course has the quite unlooked-for advantage of abolishing a commercial rival it gives rise to those internal stresses that gave rise to Hitlerism. It is, of course, possible that a "reasonable" Government might be able to combine with the Poles and with ourselves to solve their economic difficulties and to redress their wrongs in a holy crusade against the Soviet Union. It may well be that the hurried exit of Thyssen from Germany was the expression of such a desire on the part of certain industrial magnates.

We are told, and none doubts, that Hitler is not to be trusted. But have we any reason to trust the protestations of the doughty champions of democracy who connived together to betray a military alliance with Czechoslovakia and who countenanced the destruction of the legally elected Government of Spain? Would it not be justifiable to demand that precise terms of peace should be submitted to the people for their consideration? One can believe that the Government intends to crush Hitlerism but not all that Hitlerism stands for; it stands for monopoly capitalism and imperialist exploitation. Can anybody really believe that Chamberlain, Daladier and Co. really intend to abolish these features of the European landscape, except, of course, so far as is necessary to control our more formidable rivals.

Hitler once said that Germany must export or perish. It is precisely this need to export that gives rise to imperialist clashes, and the mere destruction of the Nazi regime within our present economic framework gives no promise of a lasting peace.

P. A. GORER

The Elms, Fitzroy Park,
Highgate, N.6.

SIR,—Apart from those irreconcilables who are already chanting that we can have no commerce with the unclean thing—"not shaking hands with murder," I believe it used to be called, when the unclean thing was Russia—we are, I take it, agreed that a peace offer, if it comes, must not be rejected out of hand. We are entitled to demand that there should at least be *consideration* of the terms, just in case they might after all, offer a possible basis for negotiation. Granted so much, we may, I think, add that, during the period of negotiation, we should proclaim a truce, a truce which, if the negotiations showed signs of success, might be prolonged into a peace. If, of course, they break down, then the killing can begin again; but a few lives will have been saved, and no harm that I can see done to anyone if, while we consider the terms of a possible peace, we are not bending all our energies to destroy those who offer it. The great thing, as I see it, is to get the statesmen round a table and to set them talking.

There are two major lions in the path. First, the British pledge to Poland; secondly, our advertised determination not to treat with Hitlerism. As regards the first, it is extremely difficult to see how we can now help Poland. Since Russia has also violated Poland's integrity, a full redemption of our pledge would presumably involve us in a war not only with Germany, but also with Russia. Hence I interpret the fact that we have very wisely not declared war on Russia as a tacit avowal of our recognition that the pledge is not now fully redeemable. The sensible thing to do is, surely, to recognise that the entry of Russia upon the stage has altered the situation beyond all possibility of estimation—there are already those who regard it as an event comparable in importance with the French and Russian revolutions, as in fact a turning point in history—and has rendered a *complete* return to the *status quo ante* out of the question. If we do not want to be faced with a solid Russo-German bloc, whether hybrid National-Socialist-Communist or Communist through and through, consequent upon a Left revolution in Germany, we shall be well advised to refrain from standing upon the strict letter of impossible commitments and, with one reservation to be mentioned later, to accept in Poland the *fait accompli*.

The second lion is a beast mainly composed of words. We have said that we will not make terms with Hitlerism, not, to the best of my knowledge, with Hitler. On the contrary, we have several times affirmed that the internal affairs of other nations are their concern not ours, and publicly recognised that it is not our business to interfere in them. We have affirmed, in other words, that it is not our business to depose Hitler. If, in accordance with our declared intentions, we are to leave Hitler alone, what of Hitlerism? Hitlerism, as opposed to Hitler, is presumably a state of mind which expresses itself in a policy of persistent aggression exemplified by the absorption of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Memel, and now Poland. If Hitler will renounce this policy, then, presumably, we are at liberty to treat with him. But will he, and even if he does, can we trust him to keep his word? This question most people would answer with a violent negative. Very well, then, there must be guarantees. But what guarantees can there be? I can think of only two. The first, for us to possess overwhelming force and to be prepared to use it to make Hitler behave; the second, for us *all* to embark upon a substantial measure of disarmament. The first method is, I suggest, implicitly repudiated by the very fact that we choose peace instead of war. It is, of course, just possible that Hitler may have come to the conclusion that England and France are too strong to be beaten, and will behave himself simply because he does not want to face the prospect of an endless war which he cannot win. In this case the overwhelming force guarantee might suffice to preserve peace; but a peace based on fear would be highly precarious and in fact little different from the twelve months that separated September 1938 from September 1939.

I suggest, then, that a substantial measure of disarmament is the guarantee to be aimed at—carried out under the supervision of neutral observers. Given disarmament, the outlines of a possible

peace begin to shape themselves. They take the form of a new deal for Europe under the auspices of Germany, Russia, England and France, with the co-operation of the neutrals, particularly Italy and the U.S.A. The constructive proposals of such a peace are by now sufficiently familiar. They include the abolition of customs and tariff barriers, the withdrawal of quotas, and the adoption of measures to raise the standard of living of all peoples throughout Europe. To such measures we should be required to make specific and far-reaching contributions. They would include the abrogation of the Ottawa agreements, the opening up of the British Empire as a free trading area to all comers, and the transfer of colonies and undeveloped territories to the administration of an international commission upon which all the nations who were parties to the settlement would be represented. The settlement should, I think, include from the first a hint of the possibility of a more ultimate solution. There is a growing body of opinion in favour of the view that it is only by superseding some at least of the powers of the sovereign nation-States and vesting them in a common government that we can lay the foundation of a durable peace. There can, we are beginning to see, be no guarantee of peace, so long as each nation remains absolute arbiter of its destiny and judge and jury in its own cause. A federal solution is no doubt a long shot, but it has three incidental advantages: (1) If the Nazis refuse our offer of a common government, their refusal would introduce a rift between the Nazi government and the German people. (2) It offers the Germans an alternative to the Communism which so many fear as the inevitable consequence of the fall of the Nazis; and (3) It provides the only possible solution to the problems presented by Poland and Czechoslovakia. Poles and Czechs who elected members to the parliament of a federal government would, one might hope, no longer feel the same temptation to insist on the restoration of Poland and Czechoslovakia as independent autarchic States.

It is difficult to lay down terms for the acceptance of an offer before it is made, and I am conscious of the vagueness of the outline I have drawn. I am also prepared to be told that, vague as they are, my terms are either (*a*) grossly dishonourable, or (*b*) hopelessly impracticable. The answer to (*a*) and (*b*) lies less in the terms themselves, than in the question "What is your alternative?" If we continue to fight, the consequences are incalculable, if only because it will become impossible to set bounds to the extension of the conflict. There are, however, only two possible conclusions. The first, a victory for one side; the second, a drawn battle and peace through exhaustion. The objections to a victory are, first, that we have no assurance that it is we who will be the victors, and secondly, the justifiable fear that another peace dictated by victors will be another Versailles. I remember maintaining, in the middle of the last war, that a drawn battle would be the most desirable outcome and—I hope avowal of the fact will not set the reader against me—subsequent events seem to have shown that I was right. But if the war is to end in a drawn battle followed by a peace negotiated by equals and not dictated by victors, why wait during years of unimaginable misery and loss for a result which we could have for the asking now?

C. E. M. JOAD

STALINISM

SIR,—Professor Haldane rarely fails to be impressive when he exercises his outstanding gifts as a writer and controversialist. So it goes without saying that if anyone could make a plausible case for the policy which the Communist Party has pursued since 1933, he should be able to do it. Could any reader of his article in last week's issue fail to recognise that every consideration which he advanced to justify Stalin's actions is an exposure of their inconsistencies?

For some time past a few of us have maintained publicly in these columns and elsewhere:

(*a*) that the paralysing negations of the Popular Front intellectuals and the front Opposition bench were preparing the slogans for a war in which Britain and France would be lined up with Holland, Belgium and Portugal to defend the existing system of colonial exploitation in Africa;

(*b*) that one way in which we could effectively undermine confidence in the gangster Government of Germany was to assert a constructive programme of justice for the subject peoples of the Empire;

(*c*) that it was difficult to see why the U.S.S.R. would necessarily choose to pull the imperial chestnuts of Versailles out of the fire for us.

Up to date the chief effect of saying so has been that Professor Haldane's co-religionists have exhausted the resources of their vocabulary of abuse in denouncing us as pro-Fascists, anti-Semites, Trotskyites and traitors to the proletariat. About six months ago the *Daily Worker* published an article urging the most brutal and unscrupulous *chromatocracy* in the modern world to tighten its grip on South West Africa, and less than three months have passed since the Communist nucleus of *For Intellectual Liberty* organised a petition to put Mr. Winston Churchill in the cabinet as a guarantee of good faith to Stalin.

Professor Haldane and Mr. John Strachey now join in saying, as a few of us have continued to say, that we have no right to expect Russia to defend our Empire. Professor Haldane himself goes so far as to say: "I would sooner be a Jew in Berlin than a Kaffir in Johannesburg." I earnestly hope he is sincere in this sentiment, as I was when I invited a fan-mail of vindictive denunciations from Popular Front undergraduettes by documenting it in a letter to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION last Christmas. Perhaps there might still have been time to convince the German masses that British Labour does not stand solidly behind the exploitation of coloured peoples, if Professor Haldane had joined with us in saying so then.

Let me state the issue which emerges from Professor Haldane's dialectics in this way. The Popular Front put the case for a constructive and vigorous Socialist policy for the subject peoples of the colonies into cold storage, and vilified Socialists who warned them against the consequences of doing so. On its own premises, as Professor Haldane states them, it could be justified in doing so only if it could also be certain that a Socialist majority would attain power before war came. It pursued this course in the knowledge that war might come very soon; and that, if war did come soon an effective socialist government would *certainly not* be in office. It even advertised its certainty by pressing for a reconstructed cabinet to include the most intransigeant imperialist in public life.

If then Stalin's resolve to withhold friendship from any government whose foreign policy was not "a hundred per cent. peace policy" was "fantastically consistent," the policy prescribed by the Communist protagonists of the Popular Front was fantastically inconsistent with Stalin's professions and with what they asked the electorate to believe. At the same time it withheld from the German masses the hope that they were united with the workers of Britain and France in a common struggle against exploitation of labour for private profit.

If Stalin's policy succeeds in completing the transition to totalitarian collectivism in Germany, its success will give the clearest proof that the Communists have been consistently wrong and incorrigibly wrong-headed in rallying democratic sentiment to wage an imperialist war. In these circumstances it will be difficult for those of us who foresaw the consequences of the course they pursued to exercise the charity for which "Critic" appeals, until they are prepared to make a more generous and candid admission of past error. In his professional capacity no one has a more engaging readiness to do so than Professor Haldane, and if he were able to carry the same attitude into politics I could still respect his social judgment as wholeheartedly as I admire his ability as a scientific worker.

If it is possible to rally the forces of sanity and constructive hopefulness for a planned socialist economy of abundance with the preservation of real intellectual liberty, we cannot look for leadership to those who have been tragically and utterly discredited by the events of the past weeks. We shall achieve it, if it is possible to achieve it, through a front of men and women united by what they *propose*, rather than by what they *oppose*. The letters of Mr. Wellock and Freda Utley help us to hope that it will be formed.

LANCELOT HOGBEN

Torphins.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. A. L. Rowse, finds fault with me for writing of the "treachery" of Stalin. He asks "Treachery to whom?" and suggests that I belong to a set of people who consider it an obligation for Stalin to come to our rescue. Naturally it was of no such treachery I was accusing Stalin. I was accusing him of treachery to the idea of liberty and to the future of civilisation. He has made friends with the persecutor of free peoples and cunningly shared the swag of aggression. The permanent candidate, and never likely to be member, for Penryn and Falmouth is full of arguments for the expediency of forgetting the principles upon which for many years the anti-Nazi policy of the Left in England has been based. It must be annoying for him to

find that there are members of his party who cannot bring themselves to perform such a feat of moral agility, and who very rightly see no difference between Stalin and Hitler. ESHER

Watlington Park,
Oxfordshire.

SIR,—May I congratulate you on an exceptionally interesting collection of letters, of which Prof. Haldane's appears to me the most brilliant and the most instructive? All, however, show, directly or by implication, what some of us realised from the first, that England, France and Germany are destroying each other for the benefit of Russia and the United States. That undoubtedly is how historians will see it. And if it be true, as the newspapers tell us, that never was the country so united as it is behind the War Cabinet, then that strange scientific theory according to which the instinct of self-destruction is as deeply rooted in human nature as the instinct of self-preservation, needs no further demonstration. CLIVE BELL

Charleston,
Firle, Lewes.

SIR,—Professor Haldane is quite right in insisting upon Russia's consistency; but he does not quite carry it far enough. Stalin was consistent in drilling on our Government to give pledges to Poland; consistent in pretending that he wanted peace with countries which in their slowly improving democracies are a menace to the violent change of Bolshevism; consistent in making an alliance with Germany whose ideology so nearly agrees with his; consistent in creating war in Western Europe, from which he hopes Bolshevism will profit.

When Professor Haldane says that Russia wants peace, he is also correct, if he will define that peace as a Pax Muscoviana, in which all nations are to live at peace under general direction from Moscow and, incidentally, from Stalin. There is nothing fantastic or laughable in this; the nation with a nostrum (as Islam was in the past) that sets out to conquer and destroy half humanity that it may bestow its particular blessings of peace on the world, is no new phenomenon. Germany and Russia are such twin predatory powers; and when the Man-eating Tiger and the Laughing Hyena form a real working arrangement, the outlook is gloomy for the quarry.

Why in the world should Stalin want to make peace with us and France? What had we to offer him compared with half Poland, Bessarabia, Estonia and other small countries, whom our champions of democratic Spain will gladly see mopped up by Russia?

Since Professor Haldane wrote, Stalin *has* insisted upon a partition of Poland; he follows Catherine the Great as well as Ivan the Terrible. What hope is there for human nature? Poland, persecuted by Tsarist Russia, gains her freedom (and frankly is guilty of abusing it); Bolshevik Russia seizes her share to convert, educate and liquidate anew with a million pictures of holy Stalin, propagandist cinemas and firing squads. Plus ça change.

I confess that the future which appears so rosy to Professor Haldane and to many of your readers is symbolised to me by the Gestapo and the Ogpu. PATRICK ABERCROMBIE

22 Suffolk Street,
London, S.W.1.

"IN THE LAST WAR"

SIR,—I have only just seen your issue of September 9th, in which Kingsley Martin writes: "I well remember, as a boy not yet 20, in France in the last war, a number of books which I read and re-read just because they recalled an atmosphere as unlike as possible to that of the war. . . ."

I believe Kingsley Martin to be identical with the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. If so, it is a pity he should write so ungrammatically. What concerns me more is that he should write so ambiguously. *Who's Who* does not credit (or debit) him with any war service. If this is an omission, should it not be rectified? "Democracy is entitled to be told the news, good or bad . . . carefully sifted and objective. . . ." If the Kingsley Martin who wrote the article in question, about war and democracy and censorship and objective news, did not serve in the last war, then the first of my quotations seems almost incredibly misleading, and I hope it will be explained in your columns, alongside this letter, that "the boy not yet 20, in France, in the last war" was not *in* the last war. KENNETH PICKTHORN

House of Commons, S.W.1.

[There was nothing misleading in Mr. Martin's article. He served in France as a member of the Friends' Ambulance Unit from September, 1917, till January, 1919, mainly on an ambulance train working between the British front and the base hospitals. He has on various occasions published accounts of his own experiences and views at that time. We print these personal details (which have no importance) in deference to Mr. Pickthorn's insistence. We are at a loss to understand why he should wish to suggest, especially in the present circumstances, that the tens of thousands of workers behind the lines in the last war were not "*in* the war."—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

BOOKS IN THE WAR

SIR,—When suggesting that Pirenne's already famous *Medieval History* should be added to our local public library, it was disappointing to be told that the Borough Council had decided to purchase no more new books for the duration of the war. Everyone realises the vital necessity of continuing education; the Universities are largely maintaining their courses; all are agreed that newspapers, i.e. information, are more than ever essential now. Surely our upkeep of the more lasting and useful knowledge of past and present, the broadening of our understanding for better shaping of the future, are as equally important as these. It is the lack of such understanding which permits the present tragedy. Now, when the life-stock of culture will daily be in jeopardy, is surely just the time to encourage any possible entrenchment, if not development, of our civilisation's values.

The libraries can do their valuable share in this by continuing their normal and comparatively small expenditure. I suggest we must resist at every step all hasty contractions of the public purse which are at the expense of the more fundamental and permanent needs of the community. BASIL HEMBRY

70, Mount Nod Road, Streatham, S.W.16.

THE TEST IN INDIA

SIR,—You do a great service in calling our attention to India. The press for the most part has been content to announce the contributions in men and money offered by the Indian Princes

SHARP razor—hot water—and Parke-Davis Shaving Cream! There's the recipe for the perfect shave! Your skin feels smoother, *fresher* than ever before! You can buy Parke-Davis Shaving Cream in large 1s. 6d. tubes from any chemist.

PARKE-DAVIS
Shaving Cream

to help in carrying on the war, and the almost unbelievable ignorance of English people about India (which, nevertheless, they claim the right to govern) is shown in the delighted comments of readers of these paragraphs, to the effect that "India is on our side."

If India is on our side it is because Indian leaders believe that, on the whole, we are more liberal, democratic and freedom-loving than Hitler. That this is true is the one bright star that shines above the wreck of our peace hopes to-day. That it should become much more and more widely true is our great opportunity now. We hope for the uprising of Germans against the iron repression of Nazism. At present it can only be a hope. But in India we can do more than hope; we can make actual and immediate a great extension of democracy. Indians have won the respect of British civil servants in India by the way in which they have worked the new constitution in those provinces where the Congress Party won a majority, and this in spite of Indian dislike of the constitution and a strong feeling that it was not liberal enough to make real success possible. Now is our chance, and theirs, to go much further. A policy which gave to Indians really responsible government, free and democratic, would be a beacon shining through a world of dictatorships, totalitarianism, and racial arrogance. What could be a more inspiring act than, at this very hour of danger to democracy in Europe, to plant a democracy of 360,000,000 men and women in the heart of Asia? It would be a noble proof of our belief in the principle we claim to be fighting for—a foretaste of its wider development in yet other parts of the world under British rule. It would be a call to faith and courage which in itself showed faith and courage and did not merely preach them. It would be a *sursum corda* to every believer in freedom all over the world. MAUDE ROYDEN

Nestlewood, Bayley's Hill,
Sevenoaks, Kent.

THE B.B.C.

SIR,—The question of the B.B.C. programmes bothers your correspondents. What bothers large numbers of would-be listeners is that no programme whatever is of value in many districts. On three consecutive days I have listened at Hereford, Oxford and Bournemouth. On each occasion fading and distortion were continuous, making listening intolerable.

I assume that the same state of affairs exists in many other parts of the country. Can we learn whether licence holders are wholly to be deprived of entertainment for the duration?

65 Wellington Road, Bournemouth. J. A. FRANKLIN

CENSORSHIP

SIR,—A letter addressed to my brother in Switzerland was returned to me a few days ago by the Censor. Mentioning evacuation I had written this sentence: "The idea having caught on, people have evacuated themselves from Little Muggleton ("We are within 20 miles of an aerodrome!") to Podsbury Parva and vice versa!"

The Censor warns me that my letter constitutes a breach of the Defence Regulations and that I must be more careful in future, adding, graciously, a note to the effect that "the communication will be allowed to proceed if the passage or passages referring to *location of aerodrome* are omitted." The italics are mine, the grammar his.

An official of the Air Ministry to whom I showed this letter wanted badly to borrow it for circulation among his colleagues. I refused to part with it. I value it too highly. But, sir, I would not deprive a still wider public—if you see fit to give it them—of the joy of contemplating this delightful blunder, almost German in the simplicity of mind it betrays. The original letter is at your disposal, if you wish to see it, provided you will guarantee its safe return to me. A. L. BINNEY

40 The Schools, Shrewsbury.

TRADE UNION CLUB

SIR,—More than ever during these dark days of war will our organised Labour movement need a centre such as The National Trade Union Club. Trade Unionists and Labour men and women will want a centre where they can maintain contact with each other, while democratic organisations generally will require accommodation for their various meetings and gatherings.

We are striving to keep The National Trade Union Club alive so that in times of war as in peace it can continue to serve the needs of the democratic movement.

May I appeal to NEW STATESMAN AND NATION readers to help us as much as possible. This can be done either by joining the Club or by persuading the various organisations to make use of our facilities for their meetings.

The value of the Club quite apart from its ordinary social facilities has been proved by the service it rendered such work as that of the Spanish Medical Aid Committee and by the hospitality it has extended to so many refugee writers, journalists, T.U. officials and others who have taken refuge in this country.

No other centre in London exists to carry on these tremendously useful activities, and I ask everyone to support the work that the Club strives continuously to do. BEN TILLETT,
Chairman, The Management Committee.

National Trade Union Club,
Central House, 12 Great Newport Street, W.C.2.

WARTIME LEGISLATION

SIR,—In your issue of September 30th, Critic suggests that some lawyers, with journalistic experience, should write a pamphlet on wartime legislation and the man in the street. Your readers may be interested to hear that the Labour Research Department is now completing a pamphlet on these lines, prepared by a group of lawyers and simply written. It will be priced at sixpence and will cover evacuation, A.R.P., prices, rents, the law affecting trade unions and working conditions, unemployment, pensions and compensation. We hope in this way to provide a short and convenient guide to the immense body of legislation rushed through Parliament in the last month, as it affects the ordinary man.

We value the view that in wartime it is more than ever necessary for all progressive organisations to safeguard the conditions and standards of our people; and for this, clear and simple information widely distributed is the first essential. W. H. WILLIAMS,
Secretary.

Labour Research Department,
6 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

New address for

Executor & Trustee

facilities

The Directors of the Westminster Bank announce that the Chief Office of the TRUSTEE DEPARTMENT at 53 Threadneedle Street, London, E.C.2, has removed to temporary headquarters at

8a Christchurch Road
Bournemouth

which is the existing Trustee Office in that town: to this address all correspondence should be sent.

Westminster Bank
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Trustee Department
8A CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

"A COMPLETE change," says the doctor—but he cannot give definite directions how the prescription is to be carried out. Already bored by sitting at home and by darkness everywhere, where shall we find gay crowds and lighted streets? We cannot escape from the war. Listening to the wireless, seeing old friends or making new ones, we are thinking, talking and living for nothing but that. We must forget that we are flies crawling about the bullseye of the world's biggest bombing target; must remember that for all living things the future is unknown, that there always may be an earthquake next Saturday, and that a few hours in every week, at least, we must lead our pre-war lives. Such an escape I found for two week-ends, in *Party Going* by Henry Green (Hogarth Press, 7*s.* 6*d.*) which is the perfectly inappropriate book for the times. What short description can give the flavour? Suppose Groucho Marx fell completely under the spell of Mrs. Woolf and sat down to write a novel about the rich . . . and then suppose that it turned out to be almost photographically realistic, screamingly funny, but quite lacking in Mrs. Woolf's love of the long catalogue of life which for her, and for us, is poetry. It turns out not to be a work of love (one cannot expect it of Groucho) but shrewd and cold.

* * *

Remember one of those queer fogs in which the fog is twenty feet up in the air—imagine it is half-past four in the afternoon on a December day and that you are one of a party of fashionable rich young people going out to the Riviera as guests of Mr. Max Adey, one of the most run-after young men in London. You get to Victoria to find that no trains are running because of the fog, you wait about, some of the party wander off, and then, since Julia's uncle is a director of the line, the station-master comes out and offers you private rooms in the station hotel to wait in, until the trains get running again. Perhaps you are not lucky enough to be one of the party—you are too old, drab, or poor. In that case you can be one of the odd figures who come to see them off. I hope, for your sake, you are not Miss Fellowes, Claire's aunt. But I suspect you are. Of all the bits of bad luck imaginable, a dead pigeon which had broken its neck flying into the cornice of the station in the fog, came tumbling down at old Miss Fellowes' feet just as she was walking into the station on page one. She could not leave the bird lying there—someone might have trodden on it, which would have been disgusting, so carried it off and, worrying about the vermin in the feathers, washed it in a basin of hot water in the ladies' lavatory. Her action embarrassed the two old nannies, "dressed in granite," who had also come to say goodbye to Claire. Miss Fellowes felt faint and after a struggle got herself some whisky—her father had always said a spot of it was good after hunting—and then she was really ill. For your own sake I hope you are not the central figure of that complication. Not that it would be any better to be Miss Angela Crevy's young man: the worst of fates.

* * *

Poor Mr. Robin Adams loathed all the beastly people Angela was going away with and could not help showing his jealousy and, since Angela did not know the other members of the party very well and they were all old friends, she took it out of her young man, trying to make him more jealous, to hide that she felt out of it:

> Her answer was to begin making up to Alex. She called him darling, which was of no significance except that she had never done it before, and he did not at once tumble to it that her smiles and friendliness for him, which like any other girl she could turn on at will so that it poured pleasantly out in a way water will do out of taps, had no significance either.

Mr. Green knows altogether too much about young women and presents his specimens with extreme skill. There is Angela making such disgustingly cruel scenes with her young man, who is "in a crawling frenzy of love for her," that she reduces herself to an hysterical condition. Angela, who is much the nastiest character in the party, is the best observed. There are not many such entirely convincing young women in modern fiction. Compared with Angela, Julia is almost tolerable. She has the faint but fleeting charm of extreme silliness; she cannot be alone with anyone without making them feel they have been left in charge. Julia spends her life thinking about her charms: the egg with tiny lucky elephants inside it, the wooden pistol and the top, all dating from her nursery. . . . Have they been packed? And if they have not what disasters must inevitably occur? At moments she wonders what Max will do with her, now that they'll be so much together on this party. But when he begins to make love to her she is annoyed because it interrupts her telling him about her top and is annoyed at the idea of being "mussed up."

* * *

The construction of *Party Going* reminds me of that of a ballet such as *Les Sylphides*. The subsidiary figures are grouped elegantly in the wings while two of the leading female dancers each does her solo, or they do a *pas de deux* together, until they are quite out of breath. Not till half-way through does the leading star, Amabel, appear, dazzling us by a technique and a beauty far exceeding all that has gone before. Mr. Green writes as though he were speaking. As a result his work gains greatly by being read aloud: the comedy becomes far more amusing. On my first reading I sometimes tripped up over a sentence through taking it too quickly. One of them I noticed ran to over a hundred and sixty words—more than half a page. The male star is Max Adey, the host, and I think the effect of very great wealth on the character of a young man has never been better described. Excessive wealth robs men of possessions, just as an excessive number of wives must have robbed King Solomon of any domestic life. When we first meet Max he is reflecting that he can't leave Amabel and go with his party. Then his man tells him his bags are packed, which settles the question, and he sets off for the station just after having invited Amabel to have dinner with him that night. Amabel is as rich as he is and their almost identical possessions reflect nothing of their owner's characters. They reflect only their wealth. The uniformity of the possessions of their set make them like the household servants of the same Prince, all wearing his livery.

> They avoided all discussions on taste and were not encumbered by possessions; what they had was theirs in law but was never personal to them. If their houses had burned down they had only to go to the same man they all thought best to get another built. . . . if they lost anything or even if it was mislaid the few shops they went to would be glad to lend whatever it might be, up to elephants or rhinos, until what had been missed could be replaced.

Mr. Green is a remarkable writer. His first book, *Blindness*, was published soon after he left Eton. His second, very different in style, *Living*, dealt with the lives of working people and is said by some to be his best work. Now comes this odd book about the very rich and their hangers-on. As I read the book aloud we were continually held up because it was so funny: almost every page sent us into fits of laughter. Yet an hour afterwards none of us remembered the book as comic. The impression left was as though one had been paying a visit to a nursing home and had picked up far too much knowledge of human nature in the waiting room. That does convey the flavour: Groucho taking a bunch of flowers to visit Harpo, overhearing doctors and nurses. There is something of the surgeon in Mr. Green. He is ready to make a swift incision in any of his characters and reveal pus. He is almost like one of his nannies:

> By exaggeration, and Fate they found rightly was most often exaggerated, they could foretell from one chilblain on a little toe the gangrene that would mean first that toe coming off, then that leg below the knee, next the upper leg, and finally an end so dreadful that it had to be whispered behind hands.

From this collection of the idle rich waiting for the fog to clear and the boat train to go off, one can likewise foresee far too much.

DAVID GARNETT

A LUCID INTERVAL

The Grand Whiggery. By MARJORIE VILLIERS. Murray, 16*s*.

This is a better book than most of its sort, because the author has stuck to scissors and paste, avoiding flights of fancy. Mrs. Villiers, like the great ladies she describes, is rather individual in her use of grammar. More serious, while she gives us no information that is new, she sometimes conceals or distorts the facts that we do know. In her preface she says of the Devonshire House set: "They loved and hated, as no Victorian could have loved or hated" (which seems to me nonsense); she goes on to declare that Lady Caroline Lamb was always faithful to her husband! She also seems uncertain whether Lady Bessborough was Granville's mistress—and indeed his daughter-in-law, who edited their correspondence, did her ineffective best by reckless bowdlerisation to conceal the fact. Her edition of *Lord Granville Leveson-Gower: Private Correspondence* 1781-1821 (Murray) is, despite its mutilations, one of the most enjoyable books of letters in English. If the present Lord Bessborough would give his permission for a new, complete and scholarly edition, it might gain for his great-great-grandmother the reputation she deserves, as the nearest English equivalent of Mme. de Sévigné. The letters of Lady Elizabeth Foster and of the brilliant Lady Granville also are badly in need of honest editing.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Villiers's book tells the story of the Devonshire House circle lucidly with some acute comments upon character. It makes a good guide-book to a fascinating country, where, for a privileged few, reigned *la vraie douceur de vivre*. The setting is sumptuous, Chatsworth with its pilasters and gilded glazing-bars, Palladian Chiswick, the romantic gloom of Hardwick, "black velvet furniture, casements grown over with ivy, and floating arras." Then there is the Continent: Lord Bristol with £25,000 a year from an Irish diocese which he rarely visits, buying marbles and sham Salvators in Rome; Sir William Hamilton at Naples excavating Pompeii, while his wife performs her Attitudes; Paris, best of all, up to the Revolution, and even then the Devonshire House set are all for revolutions (except in England) until the Jacobin massacres. The Napoleonic War makes Paris unattainable—that is one of many good reasons for objecting to it—Napoleon is a tyrant, of course, though the Hollands won't admit this, but at least he is preferable to the Bourbons. At home, party politics are absorbing, but continually disappointing: Pitt quarrels with Addington, Canning intrigues against Pitt, but the Foxites remain out of office until the Ministry of All the Talents—and even then the wretched "Doctor" holds a key position. (The devastation wrought by Party during the Napoleonic Wars is alarming to read of.) Yet Europe in arms did not gravely agitate Devonshire House. Indeed nothing disturbed the Duke's apathy, except an occasional impulse to beget a child or to correct a Latin quotation. And the Duchess, with Grey at her feet, was delighted that her darling friend, Lady Elizabeth Foster, should also be her husband's mistress—gambling debts and recurrent trouble with her eyes were her real anxieties. So the three lived together, while the legitimate children shared their nursery with a hodge-podge—Lady Elizabeth's children by her husband, Lady Elizabeth's children by the Duke, the Duke's child by a previous liaison, and the Duchess's child by Grey. (Mrs. Villiers omits to tell us about the last of these.)

This was the Age of Sentiment. Rousseau posthumously triumphing over Voltaire dominated the *Zeitgeist*, and though a Lady Melbourne might model herself on Mme. de Merteuil in *Les Liaisons Dangéreuses*, it was fashionable to have more heart than head. But in the Devonshire House circle, and particularly in Georgiana's sister Harriet, heart and head were exquisitely balanced. *Une âme bien née*, if ever there was one, she was married to the amiable Bessborough, a nobleman too much interested in collecting books and prints to notice society or politics. Inevitably Harriet was caught up in her sister's world, and besieged by admirers: the Prince of Wales, Sheridan, a host of others, sighed in vain. For her health's sake she spent the winter of 1793 in Italy, and when Lord Granville Leveson-Gower came to Naples with Lord Holland, he found her there with Lady Webster, who was expecting a child. There were expeditions to see the antiquities, and two long love-affairs began. Lady Webster's child was born in Florence, and, she told her husband, buried there. But when two years later she eloped with Holland, a little girl joined the establishment. It came out that at Florence the Burial Service had been read over the coffin of a goat. Lady Webster had to surrender her child—and her vast fortune—to her middle-aged husband, but she obtained a divorce, a new husband who was an angel, and a resplendent career as the tyrannical hostess of Holland House. If most women refrained from visiting her, it did not matter—she preferred men.

Lady Bessborough was more feeling and less fortunate. For some while she resisted Granville: he was only twenty when they met, she twelve years older. But soon she was utterly in love: "Beamer" and Antinous were his nicknames, and he won a European reputation for good looks by his chesnut hair and almond-shaped bright blue eyes, "those eyes," Lady B. wrote, "where I have looked my life away." Her friends were not pleased: the irresistible, the hitherto impregnable, Harriet had thrown herself away on a stick, a prig, a fop—worst of all a man that did not belong to their set. But his relations were far more angry: being stupid they could draw on unlimited supplies of moral indignation, and Devonshire House was not only debauched but subversive! In fact, Lady Bessborough's advice to Granville was invariably good, she helped him politically, she lectured him against gambling, she tried to marry him to Anne Beckford, the richest heiress in England, and she smiled on his marriage to her beloved Georgiana's child, Harriet Cavendish. Whether she remained his mistress right up to the marriage is, like so much about this relationship, uncertain. (I have heard that she had two children by him, but I cannot bring evidence for this.) The one thing certain is that she loved him regardlessly, continuously and with touching unselfishness.

Lady Bessborough's later years were filled with anxieties. Having managed her own profound passion with exemplary adroitness and self-control, she had to watch her daughter advertise an infatuation, and turn herself into a public show. Caroline had inherited much of her mother's charm, none of her sense; and Caroline's child was an imbecile. The others of the younger generation were sane enough, but intolerantly respectable and *embourgeoisés*. Hartington, who had made such a rumpus when Caroline refused him, now cared for little except his gardens and his gardener: the Devonshire House nurseries, once so miscellaneous, were silent. Harriet Granville wrote delicious letters, her wit surpassing her aunt's, but she was less sensitive, more stiff, already a Victorian, and after dinner the ageing Antinous would read to her from the Pentateuch. The brief essay in civilised liberty had petered out; Lady Bessborough was only sixty when she died, but she had already become a survivor from a brighter age.

There had been black days, of course. Nelson, Pitt and Fox had died in the same twelve months (to-day there is at least no fear of our suffering such an ordeal as this) and our allies were monotonously defeated—Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland—so that England was left leaderless and confronting the enemy alone. But to be a Whig grandee born like Lady Bessborough about the middle of the eighteenth century, was an enviable lot. The Devonshire House set enjoyed every privilege; they were highly cultivated, they formed a clan invulnerable to disapproval, they had freedom of brain and heart, they could even enjoy their scandalous wealth with a good conscience, since they maintained a militant opposition to a reactionary government. As a course of reading for the Bedlam in which we live, the books in Mrs. Villiers's bibliography could hardly be bettered, for they display one of those refreshing occasions in history when a fortunate group of men and women have contrived to combine sensibility with sense.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

MACMILLAN

"Is likely to be the most powerful novel of the season."—*D. Telegraph*

THE SEA TOWER

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"Will certainly be among the successes of the first war season . . . . Equal to anything Sir Hugh has written."—Frank Swinnerton (*Observer*) "He has the splendid energy of the born story-teller."—Robert Lynd (*News Chronicle*). 7s. 6d.

THE JACKDAW'S NEST — Gerald Bullett

This Fivefold Anthology contains stories, poems, essays and brief passages of memorable and amusing prose and verse for every time and mood. It is one of those books that, as *The Times Literary Supplement* puts it, "are more than ever the companions of man whether belligerent or not." 1000 pp. 10s. 6d.

THE CHINESE NOVEL — Pearl S. Buck

Because it defines simply and clearly the function of story-telling, this is a text-book for the novelist or for anyone who hopes one day to write a novel. Because it records the growth of one form of literature amongst a great democratic liberty-loving people, this is an essay every Englishman should read. 3s. 6d.

THE DAUGHTERS OF GEORGE III — D. M. Stuart

The story of six charming princesses and their marriages and attachments. The book is not only historically important but intrinsically entertaining, and much of the material has never before been published. Illustrated. 15s.

ENTER A CHILD — Dormer Creston

A delightful reconstruction of childhood in an aristocratic home. It is charmingly written in a series of detached scenes, and comes halfway between autobiography and fiction. 7s. 6d.

LOVE HAS NO RESURRECTION — E. M. Delafield

Her new book of short stories—every one a delight—offers splendid insulation against the irritations of the present hour. 7s. 6d.

THE SACRED BULLOCK — Mazo de la Roche

"Where the author gets her infinite understanding and knowledge of animals I do not know, but I do know that I have enjoyed nothing of its kind so much since the days when I wept over *Black Beauty*."—Monica Dickens (*Sunday Chronicle*). Illustrated by Stuart Tresilian. 7s. 6d.

MACMILLAN

VIEWS FROM NOWHERE

Sketch of a School. By CHEIRONAX. *Heinemann.* 5*s.*
Coeducation. By L. B. PEKIN. *Hogarth Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

If a millionaire gave you £250,000 to create a school to your own design, what sort of place would it be? *Sketch for a School* gives the suggestions of a cultivated man of scientific temper, who believes that the object of a school is "to turn out men who can live a life in which they exercise their powers to the full and live in unity with their fellows." He takes as his framework the conventional public school for boys, and first of all abstracts from it the most obviously objectionable features, fagging, organised religion, corporal punishment and the excesses of house competition, team-spirit and athleticism. Into it he infuses, besides a great deal of common sense, primarily two things: a system of democratic organisation and a new humanism. It is a humanism not of the ancients but of the moderns, founded on the belief that "to make is only less noble than to comprehend." The Trades, which include the work of carpenters, painters, glaziers, plumbers, electricians, engineers, fitters, farmers, gardeners, quarrymen, builders, masons and fishermen, are an integral part of the community life, and are made so not merely in the time-table but in fact, since the upkeep and extension of the school buildings and the estate is entrusted to the Trades. But the humanism extends beyond this formal arrangement; it is revealed in the author's provision for the Arts, the Gardens, the Vivarium, the Museum and the Library, and in his attitude towards games, health, sex and religion.

A system of self-government is substituted for the prefect system which is justly condemned; for being a prefect in an ordinary public school is nothing else than an exercise in totalitarianism. A prefect, Cheironax says, "requires only the virtues of a drill sergeant—to administer a system and not to be disobeyed. . . . It is said that he learns to lead men. This is not true; he learns only to order them about. . . ." The system of self-government outlined here is a sensible one, and one which, I should judge, is easily workable, although with the details one might want to disagree; but that, after all, is the purpose of the book.

It is refreshing to find writing on Education which neither preaches nor proselytises. Cheironax is a scientist, and his book strengthens my conviction that no one should be allowed to become a headmaster who has not had a scientific training. Classical firsts should be forbidden by law. Our education is rotten with dead moral precepts and literary junk; they want cutting out.

Cheironax expressly rejects coeducation, partly on purely personal grounds, partly on the grounds that "a natural association between people who are, physiologically at least, young men and women, should lead to love and off-spring . . . (that being impossible) it seemed to me that coeducational schools must cultivate an atmosphere in which romantic associations were made to appear disgraceful or absurd. . . ."

It is the obvious, and, as Mr. Pekin observes, usually the first, objection. *Coeducation* provides the answer. It provides all the answers, in fact, except the one which seems to me the most sensible, that English school life goes on a year, if not two, too long. If young men and women were not treated as children much after sixteen and a half, not only would the sexual dangers be materially reduced but we should suffer less as a nation from that retarded development for which we are notorious.

Mr. Pekin's case for coeducation is thorough, and, I think, convincing—in the abstract. He traces the history of coeducation in England and the rise of the New Education with which it is inextricably bound up. He sets out exactly the physiological and psychological differences between the sexes in childhood as far as they are known, and demonstrates that these differences stimulate rather than hamper their learning and growing up together. He admits the difficulties fairly, and answers them fully. To Cheironax's objection, for instance, his answer is—sublimation; in our climate and in our conditions full sexual intercourse is rarely needed by the immature. There are exceptions and mistakes will occur; but that possibility is not confined to schools. Besides (and this is the least attractive part of the argument) care is taken to reduce temptation:

> The proper approach to the "sexual problem" at a coeducational school involves several things. First, a minimum of definite sex stimulation (this policy must not be confused with active suppression, which is always wrong) in the form of certain foods and drinks, erotic films and literature, cosmetics, and particularly the nasty stuff which sexually jaded adults regard as suitable music for dancing. . . . Secondly there should be those active helps towards sexual control which are furnished by free and comfortable clothing, colour and freshness in the everyday physical surroundings of the school, the enjoyment of a great deal of open air life, and the practice of the arts . . . thirdly there should be no disapproval, spoken or unspoken, of the sexual nature of children as such.

The result will be natural and easy affectionate relationships and a certain amount of romantic feeling which must be treated with the seriousness, neither more or less, which it deserves.

All the same, and while thinking the case for coeducation effectively proved (with the earlier leaving age), I cannot help noticing (I think it comes out in the quotation above) too much of that rarefied atmosphere in which "progressives" often live; in that Lettuce Land of the New Thought physical and psychological hygiene reaches such a pitch that one gets a nostalgic longing for a little healthy dirt.

Sketch for a School is frankly day-dreaming, but any schoolmaster who reads it will profit immeasurably. Mr. Pekin's arguments, however convincing in themselves, leave out the major factor in the equation. In "segregated schools" the brutality (beating, etc.) which Mr. Pekin complains of and claims that coeducation would eradicate, is not retained for the purpose of indulging the sadists (though, incidentally, it may do so). It is a natural part of a system designed to train what is now called "officer material" in the military virtues

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"Escapist" has become so disparaging a term—literary critics are as prejudiced against moral, as feudal chroniclers were against physical cowardice—that we are in danger of forgetting its real meaning. Although the Marxists have flung it haphazardly at such depressingly realistic writers as Huxley and Proust, the word is popularly reserved for the lush utopianisms of an Ethel M. Dell or the rarefied sentimentalities of a Charles Morgan. It is, in fact, applied not to escapers in general, but only to those who escape in a certain direction. Actually, escapism is neither so new nor so discreditable as is sometimes pretended. It is, after all, a flight *from* rather than an escape *to*, and the stupendous sales of thrillers and cheap romances merely illustrate the equally stupendous dreariness and insecurity of modern society. In the eighteenth century, when the literate classes were confident of place and plenty, escapers chose another direction, and the age of Hume, Hogarth and Parson Woodforde relaxed in the morbid horrifics of the Gothic novel. Even to-day, escape need not always take the same route, and the worse-adjusted sections of the better-fed classes swallow expensively produced tales of proletarian squalor with the same avidity that the lower levels of the proletariat relish tuppence-coloured travesties of love in royal palaces. Escapism is largely in the mind of the reader; for there is nothing that cannot offer an escape to somebody, and the *Gulliver's Travels* of one generation may become the fairy-tale of the next. But although any book may serve as an escape, many novels could never have been anything else, and it is for the intentional rather than the accidental opiate that we should reserve our self-righteous disapproval.

How Green Was My Valley is an admirable specimen of escapism at its purest. It tells of a Welsh mining village in Victorian days, when trees grew round the pit-head and a working household could, apparently, earn forty sovereigns a week. As the years pass the family who occupy the centre of the stage grow old and marry and scatter and die, until the narrator, the last of all his tribe, with wandering steps and slow, through Eden takes his solitary way, and leaves his green paradise to Unions, labour troubles and growing mountains of slag. But, despite its ending and the gradual downfalls that overtake many of its characters, this is an unashamed picture of the Golden Age, when men were brave and free, women pure and fair, and virtue always landed the uppercut. We are never taken down the mines unless to witness some deed of heroism, and although the author devotes pages of description to one prosperous meal he hurries over thirty weeks of unemployment in a few lines. There are unpleasantnesses of course—a girl goes mad, and a sexual maniac is piously lynched—but they are on a heroic scale and usually attributable to the English, the Reds, or some spiteful undersized weakling with all the vices the big-muscled characters lack. Mr. Llewellyn's novel is undeniably good reading. He writes as fluently as Dylan Thomas, if with a more controlled imagination, and describes the physical ecstasies of his honeyed Canaan with the relish of a mediaeval mystic confronted with the Grail:

> There is good dripping toast by the fire in the evening. Good jelly dripping and crusty, home-baked bread, with the mealy savour of ripe wheat roundly in your mouth and under your teeth, roasted sweet and crisp and deep brown, and covered with little pockets where the dripping will hide and melt and shine in the light, deep down inside, ready to run when your teeth bite in. Butter is good, too, mind. But I will have my butter with plain bread and butter, cut in the long slice, and I will say of its kind, there is nothing you will have better, especially if the butter is an hour out of the churn and spread tidy.

How Green Was My Valley is a fine piece of narrative and will probably have considerable success; but to claim, as the publishers do, that it is "a novel that will make history" is going a good deal too far. When one is hungry, bacon smells sweeter than roses, but that does not entitle it to an absolute superiority. Mr. Llewellyn's book is the finest wish-fulfilment I have read for a great while, and as long as would-be saints and heroes live on boiled eggs in lonely bed-sitting-rooms, it is bound to have many admirers. But it does, after all, appeal only to the emotionally discontented, while the novels that really make history must appeal to dissatisfied minds.

Karel Capek is an instructive contrast to Mr. Llewellyn. *The First Rescue Party* is also about coal miners, but this time they are not the proud masters of their fates, but the servants of the mine and of their own conventions. There is an accident in which three men are entombed, and a party volunteers for the dangerous and laborious rescue-work. Among them are a handsome young Swedish engineer, a fireman, very conscious of his superior status, a sage old miner, a tough young miner, an unhappy introvert whose wife refuses to sleep with him, and the sensitive boy through whose eyes we see the story. The party do their best, but there is a further subsidence in which one of them is killed and another injured. Nothing else happens. Out of this rather meagre material Capek has written a quiet but distinguished book. Since only the educated (and not many of them) are able to express the more complex emotional relationships, they tend to believe that only their own kind have complicated feelings to express, with results as disastrous to writers as they are familiar to readers. The merit of *The First Rescue Party* is in showing the mining village not merely as a collection of houses and personalities huddled round a hole in the ground, but as an elaborate and interrelated social structure. The rigid hierarchy of crafts, the difficult adjustments between partnership underground and social distinction above, and that eternal bane of working-class life, the lodger, throw up problems that even a common disaster finds it hard to override. This is, in short, a typical Capek subject, and though the plot obviously restrained his imagination, it gives full opportunity to his humour and narrative talent.

Parole d'Honneur is a curious little book. Herr Freud (who,

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incidentally, is a son of Professor Freud) claims in his Introduction to have received the manuscript from an eccentric Baron just before his expulsion from Austria, and although this is the oldest of literary devices, it is told with so much convincing detail that one is almost inclined to believe it. The story itself is a light-hearted, cold-blooded romance of the Great War, written with the naive cynicism that seems a Central European speciality. The narrator, an odd, brilliant, recklessly brave Austrian artillery officer, recounts his war experiences, which range from quarrelling with his superiors and attempting to win the battle of the Piave single-handed, to disguising a girl in soldier's uniform and smuggling her into a prison camp. Herr Freud (or the Baron) has an observant and original mind that can find unexpected fantasy in the most unpromising situations:

> Heavy shells came howling and whistling over us as though to destroy everything, and the swampy ground swallowed them down with a loud smacking sound, a sound as of living lips—not the lips of a human being but of some vast fabulous creature like an over-life-size hippopotamus; then the shell made a second noise down below, which sounded from the depths like a human voice, and which everyone could translate as he wished. Oh, how delicious! said the earth, or, More please.

It is difficult to do justice to *Parole d'Honneur*, since it is so far apart from the main stream of contemporary novels that it would require a redefining of critical clichés. One can, however, say that it is a witty and imaginative entertainment for the lighter-hearted intellectual, which owes a good deal to *Candide* and has not disgraced Voltaire in the borrowing.

Since *The Blood of the Martyrs* is the seed of the Church, Mrs. Mitchison's study of early Christianity in Rome can only be described as a very seminal novel. And oh, what a lot of seed there is! Whips whistle, lions leap, slaves screech and Romans rape, while Christians turn the other cheek and Tigellinus strikes it. There are purple and gold and wolves on the fold, and a British convert, flaxen and bold. There's a Nero who talks of "Strength Through Joy," and a Praefect who pinches a beautiful boy. There is, indeed, such a packed posy of pains and perversions that one almost expects to find "For sale to bona-fide Christians and classical students only" stamped on the jacket. Mrs. Mitchison has spoilt a good story by overdoing it. The underworld of Rome was probably as bloody and licentious as she paints it, but it wouldn't have seemed quite so lurid to the Romans. One can imagine an historical novel about our own time in which cancer, contraceptives, halitosis and road-accidents obsessed the characters and influenced most of their behaviour. This may, in fact, be the truth; but if it is, we are no more conscious of it than a savage is of his own superstition. A good historical novel must see through the eyes of its characters; Mrs. Mitchison's Christians are like a Fabian summer school captured by white slavers. Mrs. Mitchison is a teller of folk-tales, and *The Corn King and the Spring Queen* owed its distinction to its unashamed pagan mysticism. The crudities of Imperial Rome are the worst possible subject for her very considerable talents. JOHN MAIR

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The thesis of the book is quite simple. The Bolsheviks secured power because Lenin understood the historical conditions of the Russian scene. In 1905 the first victory over autocracy had been won by the working class. At the same time the political impotence of the Russian bourgeois class had been revealed. The war of 1914-18 made possible a co-operation between the workers and the peasants which had been lacking in 1905. The peasants flocked to the large towns to fill the gaps made by mobilisation and the great slaughters at the front. This new uneducated working class, without settled traditions, with no technical knowledge and devoid of political education, was a great mass which could be set in motion by a party of professional revolutionaries. "The strength and weakness of Lenin's party was the ability to organise and to act as a disciplined army capable of carrying out orders, but always at the mercy of an error on the part of their leaders and in danger of sinking into an intellectual passivity contrary to their theoretical mission as vanguard and model." To Trotsky who organised the Red Army and to Lenin who made the Bolshevik party the revolution owed its salvation.

After the Civil War between the Red and White Armies there was nothing left of Bolshevism except the organisation of the professional revolutionaries. In this was embodied, on the scale of an immense state, the military idea of a close organisation under the orders of a secret circle of leaders. This party had guided the revolution, won the civil war, mastered anarchy, forged a mechanism of power and begun an economic reorganisation. After the death of Lenin under the thin varnish of imported Marxist theory there reappeared the familiar face of barbaric Russia with Stalin as the new Tsar of the old Russian knout-state.

How had Stalin come to power? Souvarine tells us that "from the course of events, the tracing of history and the unravelling of texts there emerges in sufficiently clear relief this repulsive character whose prodigious destiny it is so difficult to explain outside of the Soviet Union." Born in Georgia in 1879 Stalin found at Tiflis in 1893 the germ of a revolutionary Socialist movement which had been made possible by the nascent industrialisation of the Caucasus. In his early political activity he showed a sense for practical work, a power of acting when others were talking, a rare composure and firmness which mark the useful executive to a leader of genius. That genius was Lenin. Under Lenin he acquired a technique of government, a modicum of empirical political science and all that he was to know and misunderstand of Marx. Where Lenin was large and disinterested, Stalin was shabby and mean. His will to power was disproportionate to his will to know. He had an Oriental dexterity of intrigue and a scorn of men and human life. He was cunning, crafty, treacherous and brutal. By petty means be sought a power which he has implacably held.

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In 1922 Stalin became Secretary General to the Central Committee. By this time the party organisation had been substituted for the party. Working class opinion could hardly penetrate through the six stages of the party organisation—cell, group, locality, province, republic, Soviet Union—to the Central Committee which was the seventh rung. This Central Committee ousted the party organisation and—after Lenin's death—the dictatorship ousted the Central Committee. For after Lenin's death a mere Marxian verbalism which was all the party theory there was could offer no resistance to the habits of a society more than a century behind the evolution of the civilised world. Stalin was master of the party through the machine and master of the State through the party.

In saying that on the economic side the rule of Stalin is a story of "ruin on ruin, rout on rout, confusion worse confounded," M. Souvarine seems to overshoot the mark. There is more than this to be said for the Five Year Plan and the gigantic industrialisation of the U.S.S.R. M. Souvarine puts the contrast in this way. Lenin had attempted in the N.E.P. to set up a composite economy, to hold the balance between a healthily competing state control and capitalist initiative. Stalin aimed at complete state control, and the adjustment of agriculture to industry and production to consumption by ruthless bureaucratic control. His policy was "only possible at the price of mass slaughter at its inception and of absolute mass servitude in the present and the future."

If M. Souvarine paints the economic side of Stalin's rule as one of ruin and rout his political picture is one of horror absolutely unrelieved. Mass executions and faked trials were a normal part of the system. The more Stalin persecuted his opponents the more he sought his own apotheosis. "The hagiography composed in honour of the dead Lenin is nothing beside the canonisation of the living Stalin." Two examples may be cited. Careerist engineers call an extra hard steel "stalinite." The editor of *Izvestia* declares, "Can anyone really write on anything unless he knows his Stalin? Never! Without Stalin no one can understand anything or write anything of interest."

If Souvarine is right then Stalin is one of the most callous and brutal dictators the world has ever known. But his system is also most inefficient. In war it should collapse utterly. "Neither industry nor agriculture, and still less transport, is ready in the U.S.S.R. to endure the high tension of modern war." In war time its engines would lack oil or petrol, its artillery ammunition and repairs will be impossible. What is difficult to hold in the focus of the mind if M. Souvarine's picture is to be accepted is that throughout Germany and Russia—an area containing over 200 million one-time Europeans—the life of thought and the barest essentials of civilisation should be in such deadly peril.

K. SMELLIE

JUST BEFORE IT STARTED

Marginal Comment. By HAROLD NICOLSON. *Constable.* 5s.

France. By WLADIMIR D'ORMESSON. Translated by J. LEWIS MAY. *Longmans.* 6s.

The Defence of France. By EDOUARD DALADIER. *Hutchinson.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Harold Nicolson's little book, modestly, but not inappropriately, called *Marginal Comment*, makes delightful reading. It is, in fact, a reprint of his weekly notes in the *Spectator* between January and August of this year, but a reprint which is more than justified. The articles, when read to-day, are an admirable reflection of the doubts, fears, and hope-against-hope in the mind of a particularly astute and intelligent observer of post-Munich Europe. Like so many others, Mr. Nicolson hoped to the last moment that British firmness would stop Hitler from attacking Poland.

On July 7th he wrote:

> If we desire to convince either Germany or Russia, it is essential that within the next few days this dangerous aperture [the hope of another "Munich"] should be closed by the inclusion within the Cabinet of men pledged to resistance, and by transferring to the Foreign Secretary and his expert advisers the conduct of our foreign affairs.

It is difficult to say what difference this would have made in the case of the Moscow talks; but as regards Germany, there is a passage in Mr. Nicolson's book which suggests that Hitler would not necessarily have been put off by anything—not even by a British-Russian alliance. It is when he says that Munich was, in reality, a bitter disappointment to Hitler:

> Observers of his behaviour after the Munich settlement have reported that the gusts of rage, jealousy and mortification which then swept over him transcended all normal political feelings and suggested the frustration of some overwhelming passion. Politically he obtained at Munich one of the greatest triumphs in diplomatic history; yet his nerves remained jarred and jangled by the denial of his full fulfilment of martial potency.

If so, is it certain that *anything* could have stopped him from attacking the Poles? Or was he, until the last moment, still hoping for an "appeasement" miracle to happen either here, or in France? It is doubtful. But he may be hoping for such a miracle now—especially since he has satisfied his "martial potency" in Poland. Unless, of course, he is genuinely confident that he can beat us. One wonders.

There is an interesting passage in Mr. Nicolson's book on the reason why we are fighting this war. In July he recorded a conversation he had in a pub with two Territorials.

> "So you are not prepared," I asked them, "to fight for Democracy?" "You bet we're not," they answered. "Then surely," I suggested winningly, "you must agree that it is illogical to spend so many of your spare hours training if you are not prepared to fight when the moment comes?" "But who said," they protested, "that we are not prepared to fight? We're mad keen to fight . . . We don't want to fight *for* anything in particular; we want to fight Hitler."

And, pressed to say *why* they wanted to "fight Hitler," the Territorials replied: "Well, he's treated us like dirt."

Sophisticated people may have wondered whether in saying that we were "fighting Hitlerism" Mr. Chamberlain stated our war aims sufficiently clearly and logically. But was he not, in saying so, putting into the simplest possible form the deepest feelings of this country, the anger of this country?

There is a lot of other good stuff in the book; for instance the devastating little description of M. Pierre-Etienne Flandin,

> at one time a regrettable, but now unregretted Prime Minister of France. Monsieur Flandin always reminds me of a sea-lion just turned fifty. He is enormous; he is sleek; he is complacent; and the nimbleness of his head contrasts strangely with the impression of weighty consistency, of pompous malevolence, which his frame conveys.

Rather less *méchant* is Mr. Nicolson's description of Sir John Simon explaining in his masterly fashion the reasons why the Czech gold had to be handed over to Germany:

> It was as if an admirable dentist, in a moment of anxious perplexity, had taken six of his horrid little instruments into his hand at once.

The most charming among the non-political essays deals with the (unanswerable) question why each country has a "north" and a "south," quite regardless of latitude. The French of Boulogne are, in temperament, unmistakable northerners, the English of Kent unmistakable southerners; the Italians of Piedmont are northerners, the French of the Rhône valley southerners; there is a dourness at Boulogne which is more like Aberdeen than Kent, only a few miles away. Why? Mr. Nicolson says there is no answer.

M. d'Ormesson, Foreign Editor of the *Figaro*, has written here a useful little survey of French foreign policy since the war. It is useful, above all, as an expression of the Italophil point of view; and a good number of points are stretched or squeezed very hard to fit into his scheme—for instance, the Stresa Conference at which, in his opinion, Mussolini showed a genuine desire to make friends with Britain and France—a desire which was frustrated by the wicked sanctionists. He refuses to accept the much more weighty view that Stresa was nothing but a Mussolinian manoeuvre. Much of the book seems to have been written hastily, and from an imperfect memory. He attributes the death of Alexander of Jugoslavia to a "Macedonian" assassin. The assassin was, of course, a Croat. Nor did M. Barthou die "a few seconds," but an hour, after the outrage. The German vote in the Saar plebiscite was not 98 per cent., but 90 per cent.; and it is absurd to say that in this plebiscite "the voting was perfectly fair, perfectly in order," when, in reality, Nazi terrorism was exercised on a large scale. The book, written last summer, ends on a gloomy note, but with an expression of deep faith in France's material and moral strength.

The Daladier speeches of the last year are useful for reference, though in this book they are both badly arranged and poorly translated. Why speak of "German revendications" when "claims" would do much better? The speeches range from the embarrassed defence of Munich on October 4th to the French

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Premier's mor erecent, and much more straightforward utterances. In these one feels the voice of a strong man, fully confident of his weight and authority in the country. There is a brief biography of Daladier at the beginning of the volume, which is also useful for reference, though the more "controversial" episodes in his astonishing political career are slurred over or simply omitted—such as the February, 1934, riots which forced his short-lived government out of office; and the role he played, first in building up, and later, in demolishing the Popular Front. If this is propaganda, it is clumsy propaganda; for it can "go down" only with the totally ignorant. We prefer Daladier as a living man with all his ups and downs to the paragon of perfection to which we are here introduced. A. W.

BOOKS TO COME

A new novel by Mr. Aldous Huxley is a particularly welcome event in these bleak times. Few writers have now the necessary detachment to treat great themes imaginatively. *After Many a Summer*, to be published by Chatto and Windus on October 12th, is described as a kind of fantastic parable in illustration of the belief that "God is not mocked." Broadly speaking, an investigation into the problem of good and evil, it is a nightmarish story of the attempt by a rich man, terrified of death, to prolong the span of human life.

Further good news. Dorothy Parker is one of the best possible antidotes to gloom. Longmans publish on October 9th a volume, *Here Lies*, containing all the best of her prose work including four stories which have not hitherto appeared in book form.

Mr. Peter Quennell's treatment of the Hanoverian family scene is something else to which we may look forward with pleasure. His *Caroline of England: An Augustan Portrait*, comes from Collins on October 16th. Here we may see George II to whom "adultery was a duty and marriage a pleasure" seen off by Caroline every evening for Mrs. Howard's apartments; the old Duchess of Kendal revering a raven which she supposed to be the late George I; Caroline and George II supporting Handel at the Haymarket whilst their son patronised the Italian opera faction in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Cassells announce for October 12th *Men, Women and Places*, a collection of essays by Sigrid Undset on a variety of themes, literary, historical and scenic. Her subjects include D. H. Lawrence and a Baltic tour, *Summer in Gotland*.

The spirit of Germany as it is reflected in literature may be studied in *Modern German Literature*, 1880-1938, coming from Methuen on October 12th. The author is Jethro Bithell, lately Reader in German in the University of London. Mr. Bithell deals critically with the successive movements of naturalism, impressionism, expressionism, *Neue Sachlichkeit* and finally with the *Blut und Boden* literature of the Nazi regime—romanticism gone to seed.

Most opportunely, Macmillans announce for October 17th Dr. Benes' *Democracy, To-day and To-morrow*, a fine statement of the case for democracy by the ex-President of Czechoslovakia. Dr. Benes, undaunted by the temporary eclipse of his nation, is convinced that the fight against dictatorship for the free development of the personality is bound to succeed in the end. His book is an apologia for all engaged in the struggle against Hitlerism.

A book on Czechoslovakia itself is coming from Nicholson and Watson, on October 12th or 26th. *Czechs Against Germans* by Philip Paneth, a journalist who has recently escaped from the clutches of the Gestapo in Prague, provides an eye-witness account of the events in Czechoslovakia since Munich. Some chapters which should be of especial interest deal with the subterranean activity which has led to the recent revolt. In a final section, Dr. Paneth defines the attitude and importance of Czechoslovakia in the War.

In *The Healing Knife*, Dr. George Sava told how as a penniless White Russian youth, he made his way from the Caspian through the Balkans, France and Italy to Germany and his career as a surgeon. In a sequel, *A Surgeon's Destiny*, to be published by Fabers on October 12th, he gives a further instalment of his adventures in Germany and in England where he is now a consulting surgeon with a West End practice.

Mr. Richard Hughes has written an introduction to a remarkable record of adventure, *Escape to the Sea* coming from Murray on October 10th. The author, who calls himself Fred Rebell, sailed single-handed in an open boat 9,000 miles across the Pacific "in quest of happiness." His voyage from Sydney to Los Angeles was performed in an eighteen-foot open racing boat, with only a canvas hood for shelter. It took him a year and a week. No comparable adventure in a small open boat has ever been recorded.

Allen and Unwin have a spy story to end all spy stories in *I Spy! Or Europe Without Tears* by Maurice Bethel Jones, due on October 10th. Those who have never tried making love in manacles should consult this useful guide to the social usage of the Secret Service.

Cape publishes on October 13th *The Emperor Charles V* by Karl Brandi, a study which represents the life-work of a distinguished German scholar.

To Town, a new novel by Randall Swingler, is announced by the Cresset Press for October 9th. Its theme is the interaction of town and country life and the forces beyond the life in the town which produce a crisis in the form of a factory strike. The Cresset Press publish on the same day *Wall Street Under Oath* by Ferdinand Pecora, a book which tells the inside story of American finance. MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

Week-end Competitions

No. 504

Set by Raymond Alderson

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best lyrical ode of not more than 20 lines to the balloon barrage.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 501

Set by T. W. Earp

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best 16 lines for a Book of Etiquette in verse.

Report by T. W. Earp

It seems worth noting, as social history, that most of the entries give instruction on what should not be done, rather than on what to do. They conceive etiquette less as a matter of ceremonial behaviour than of not getting on other people's nerves. Typical offences are thus catalogued:

> Breathing on broth, sonorous with the soup,
> Slaps on the back with "Ah! well met, hail fellow!"
> Or at the tardy breakfast-table group
> Greeting a guest with "O you're looking yellow!"
> (G. Summers)

Such time-honoured problems as which corner of the visiting-card should be turned down, and when; or which arm to offer, and where; are left untouched. So is the grave issue referred to in Mozley's reminiscences of the Tractarians: "At Hall dinner one day Denison, sitting at the head of the high table, broke out into a sudden rage at the rhubarb tart having been sent up hot instead of cold, as he had ordered, he said, and as was the uniform custom, he added, in good society. He ordered up the cook. Was there ever such a barbarism heard of as serving rhubarb tart hot? Where could Mr. King have lived to know no better than that?" The ruling that—

> A gentleman who goes to pay a call
> Hat, stick, umbrella leaves out in the hall. (R. R. Gibbs)

runs flatly counter to the injunction of a work of the 'eighties. There it is decreed that those objects are to be taken into the drawing-room on afternoon calls, to reassure the hostess that the visit will not be a long one. On the other hand:

> Spilt salt should not be flung on high
> In case you hit the butler's eye. (C. Best)

is guidance for all time. Most contemporary are B. L.'s hints:

> Though coal restrictions are in force
> You always bath alone, of course . . .
> And though the fires are underfed,
> Boots are never worn in bed.

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V. Vanitatum, though his counsel should be unnecessary, may also be quoted :

When you visit, do not, please,
Perch on your hostess's knees,
Nor, if your host comes, roughly cry :
" Butler ! butler ! Swat that fly ! "

But for sustained afflatus and a fresh view of the problem, despite a repeated rhyme, Alice Herbert is recommended for the first prize, and Towanbucket for the second.

FIRST PRIZE

Two halfpenny stamps have a miserly look ;
Always affix to your postcard a penny one.
Shunning the usage in this or that book,
NEVER allude to " the Honourable " anyone.

You may be lovely as Helen, and yet
Colour and line will be less than no good to you
If you are heard to demand a " serviette " :
Everyone present will long to be rude to you.

Grammar and spelling may go by the board with you ;
Leave them to dowds with their noses in books :
But—if you dread having none but the horde with you,
NEVER pronounce a " good " name as it looks.

After all this, here's the safest advice to you :
Be at your ease and feel second to none ;
Then, if you've cash enough, nothing is rash enough
Really to bar you from W.1. ALICE HERBERT

SECOND PRIZE

And at this point, dear reader, we confess
An overwhelming impulse to digress :
To point out how Lord B., a viscount's heir,
Lost caste because he lacked all *savoir faire.*
Not only did this noble sprig tuck in
His table-napkin underneath his chin,
But very much to everyone's regret,
They heard him call the thing a serviette !
This happened, we remember, at a Spa,
And following his lordship's sad *faux pas,*
The Marquess W.'s attractive daughters
Declined the culprit's arm to take the waters ;
While grim, strong-minded Lady G. spoke out
Her view that he was nothing but a lout . . .

The moral's plain, that even in a lord,
Disdain of etiquette is still abhorred. TOWANBUCKET

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 502

Set by William Whitebait

We offer the usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) for the reactions to a darkened London of one of the following : Dr. Johnson, De Quincey, George Moore, Pepys, Henry James, Proust, Mrs. Carlyle, Horace Walpole, Dickens, Swift.

Report by William Whitebait

When, the other week-end, there was a moon, Londoners enjoyed almost an old-fashioned Saturday night. The town turned out. True, it was cloudy most of the time, but in the cheesy light crowds strolled up and down Edgware Road, along Oxford Street, into Hyde Park. The Park was delightful : for once a pool of light into which the most respectable could venture. Instead of the usual Orators' Corner people stood in groups and sang, cockily, sentimentally ; the Serpentine stretched under a mottled sky that might have come from an oleograph ; and for a while there was the curious spectacle of the moon with a small dark balloon on its rim like an insect clinging to a fruit. Whatever discomforts the black-out may have brought, on fine nights it has restored to London its sky. How many years must it be since anyone was able to stand in Piccadilly Circus and look for shooting stars !

A number of competitors saw compensations, and one wrote to suggest that Oscar Wilde's name might have been included in the list : a Wilde-Whistler appreciation of London in wartime would certainly have been agreeable. Yet even those authors who were made to attack restrictions most vigorously, discovered advantages of a philosophic if not aesthetic kind. Competitors assumed that Pepys and Dickens would have found adventure, that Henry James would have been appalled, that Proust would have recoiled delicately to examine new sensations, that De Quincey would have welcomed a darkness on which to throw the cinematograph of his reverie. Carlyle would of course have complained bitterly and interminably. Dr. Johnson—by far the most popular with contributors—was made to exclaim with equal common sense both for and against black-outs :

Dr. Johnson : Sir, if Government has imposed it for the public good, it must be tolerated. Yet this is not to prevent us from deploring that the machination of the King's enemies have brought us to a state when a man may walk abroad at night in the streets of London and believe himself in the wildernesses of Scotland. (Desmond Cowper.)

Dr. Johnson : Sir, we can still talk. (Alixandre.)

The great man having spoken of the black-out, I asked him, was it not a troublesome inconvenience to him in his evening walks abroad ?

" Not at all, sir ! " he replied. " I have to suffer all the less the faces of fools."

There were three Johnsons for one of each of the others. Pepys for some reason was overlooked by competitors, but I liked this passage from *Mr. Pepys Goes Home* (Allan Laing) :

Near my flat in St. James's Street, I walking with hands spread out before me, I did come with some violence against a woman who cried out in a sweet, pretty voice. She seeming young, I did clutch her something longer than necessary. Then with the customary courtesies we parted, I guessing that her perfume was *Fleurs d'Amour.* Lord send my wife a cold that she may not smell it on me. . . . I do perceive that the prospect of this dayly darkness do not entirely depress me.

Of the rest, there were good passages in Miss G. Pitt's Henry James :

The exact hue of our situation is perfectly reflected by the sombre thrillingness, the enigmatic velvet, as it were, of this nocturnal mask, which has indeed imposed an undeniable richness on the outward appearance of our suddenly impoverished existence.

Suffering past bedazzlement, as it characterised normality, and conceding reluctant acknowledgment of commercial activity, one couldn't not deplore that luminous excess which precisely didn't enhance a nobly austere magnificence.

Now at a deplorable event's command, wholly obscured or imperfectly glimpsed, London was never so intensely, so imperturbably her tremendously unique self. (Miss G. Pitt.)

No one quite succeeded in hitting off Proust or De Quincey. I recommend that the first prize be given to N. Lewis for a charming Walpole letter, and the second to " X " for his Dickens (address please).

FIRST PRIZE

HORACE WALPOLE ON THE BLACK-OUT

Now I shall tell you of the present state of our London—very black, very strange, full of pitfalls, beadles, wardens, the most extraordinary noises and silences. The Thames is become a moat : our sober green squares are grottoes peopled with—who shall be certain ? I for one should feel no surprise to find a whole army of fays, houris, goblins—what you will—pacing a gavotte among the gardener's admired geraniums. One is peevish at the lack of a cheering torch and at the peril of the roadways ; yet, Lord ! in the moon (of which we have fortunes plenty this week) could anything be more Gothic ? All discomforts are forgotten. I will confess even that the pointed roofs of no more than a street of wretched houses—the dullest buildings on earth under Sol—sent no ordinary frisson through me : I would have transported them (preferably in little : I am ill at ease with the Gargantuan) to my own Strawberry. Yet would there be some—and you among them, perhaps—who would act the Fool to crazed Lear, and scoff my poor ruins :

Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

So much for bricks and mortar and moonshine. My Spaniel, Rosalba—the dearest, prettiest, fattest creature, can make nothing of the darkness : the sweet wretch will not stir an inch from me after nightfall. I fear she is in a despondency, though when day comes she recovers her spirits amazingly. The stars perplex her : why are they not also shrouded ? I avow their light looks quite impertinent when the rest of our little world is decently veiled. One other thing—I am much minded to walk abroad—*after* dusk—in a monkish garb I have—hood and cowl of white : it should be a beacon to passing charioteers and other traffic. Moreover, as you will have guessed just six seconds before, knowing me to be a glutton for sensation—if I cannot (although the son of my father) inspire awe by daylight, let me at least be a ghost by night.

N. LEWIS

SECOND PRIZE

MR. PICKWICK'S BLACK-OUT

" It's very dark," said Mr. Pickwick, in apprehensive tones as he stepped into the coach at Blackfriars.

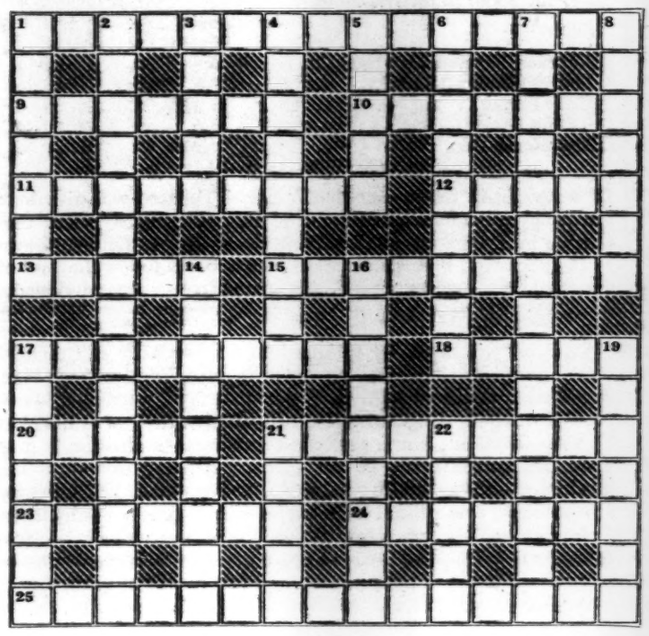
" Cimmerian—quite ! " agreed Mr. Jingle, as they set off. " Burglar's paradise—policeman's nightmare—nightwalkers' holiday—misery for hot-chestnut man—lamplighters, too—out of job—felo-de-se—sad, very ! All the same—compensations—artists pleased—Albert Memorial invisible—no sky-signs—astronomers, O be joyful—also Love's young dream," added Mr. Jingle, with a leer, which was quite lost on Mr. Pickwick, since he hadn't yet learned to see in the dark. At this moment the coach mounted the pavement and almost upset, causing Mr. Pickwick to gasp in alarm, and forcing even Alfred Jingle to suspend his flow of conversation for a few seconds.

" No cause for alarm—careless driver—probably half-seas-over," he said at last, when they had jolted safely on to the road again. " Remember—years ago—dark night—hansom—Strand—driver tiddly—threw me out—fell on my head—hospital six weeks—cheerful, very ! "

With an air of finality, the coach stopped, and the driver got off his box to say in surly tones that " 'E ver lorst and vot vos the parties proposin' to do about it ? ". " X "

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 500

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
H. E. B. Boulton, 44 Richmond Hill Court, Richmond, Surrey

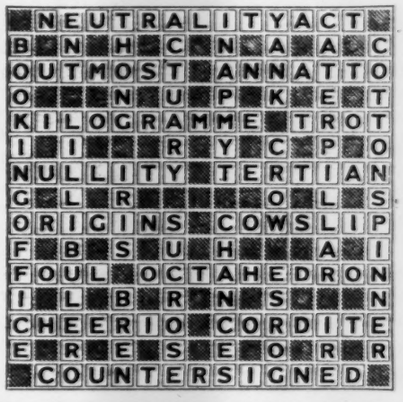
ACROSS

1. Two persons are bound to enter this contest. (15)
9. Function of a fence. (7)
10. Fell—as a result of a stomach wound? (7)
11. Pa's hints I take for holy living. (9)
12. It just streams down. (5)
13. How the hen was encouraged to lay no doubt. (5)
15. A Pole-ish direction. (9)
17. A five-bob plot? (9)
18. His B.A. is often spoken of in India. (5)
20. Is in the beer. (5)
21. And the flowers Longfellow put on him. (9)
23. Carries out a costly settlement. (7)
24. Obviously the R.E. went back by rail. (7)
25. Kingly contest—in Olympian surroundings, of course. (15)

DOWN

1. A couple of pedals. (7)
2. Suggests a nursery Pegasus. (15)
3. (rev.). In the possessive. (5)
4. Not, as you'd suppose, a huge Indian island. (9)
5. How to deck oneself out on waking. (5)
6. Mad cheers for diplomatic proceedings. (9)
7. Everyone / The Country House. (15)
8. Land in the Antarctic. (7)
14. Is this the Seat of the Lightfoot Family? (9)
16. Doggy description of the evening sun in fine weather. (9)
17. Measure of the Scots when they were dry. (7)
19. If you take one from him he's still himself in short, Sir. (7)
21. Donkey into poet. (5)
22. Eager to concur in the reverse. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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W. M. Thackeray, "THE VIRGINIANS"

WILLS'S
THREE CASTLES
CIGARETTES

This Advertisement is set up in CENTAUR *and* NARCISSUS. TT. 206C
Narcissus: Drawn in 1921 by Walter Tiemann from a heavier version of Fournier's shadow letter. Centaur: Designed by Bruce Rogers in 1914.

"We cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individual. Towards this end each of us must work toward his own highest development, accepting at the same time his share of responsibility in the general life of humanity—*our particular duty being to help those to whom we feel we can be most useful.*"

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE BUDGET—SOME EQUITIES AND E.P.D.—WALL STREET AND THE WAR

SECOND thoughts on the Budget of the more serious-minded people in the City were rather gloomier than the first. It was felt to be economically unsound to deflate private enterprise and consumption so drastically before the armed services and armament industries were ready to absorb the new Simon unemployed. With this view I entirely agree. If this is to be a war of attrition it is surely vital to maintain activity in prosperous trades as long as possible. The slump in London so largely dependent upon its financial, export and agency earnings, has already been serious enough. I feel that the Stock Exchange has not yet realised the implications of a budget which on the one hand has erred on the side of deflation too soon and on the other has given no guarantee that an inflation will ultimately be avoided. The gilt-edged market should take no comfort from the thought that the Chancellor's estimates of revenue collections are not likely to be realised. However, the market cannot well express an opinion until the ice of minimum prices, which has hitherto frozen up dealings, has been thawed. As regards the equity markets, brokers have been busy searching for companies which will not be unduly affected by the new E.P.D. Except in the case of recently created companies, the standard profits, on which excess profits will now be subject to a 60 per cent. tax, are those of the calendar years 1935 and 1936, alternatively, the average profits of either 1935 or 1936 *and* 1937. (N.D.C. is abolished where the yield from it would be less than from E.P.D.). Thus, the companies with a steady record of earnings or with a prosperous record in 1935–37 will be preferred by investors to those whose earnings were depressed or rapidly growing (as in the case of Trinidad Petroleum Development) in the standard period. But why young and virile companies should be penalised is a question which Sir John Simon should be made to answer.

The shares favoured by this consideration of E.P.D. have been tending to rise this week—for example, Imperial Chemical Industries, Imperial Tobacco and certain steel companies. I would also add to this list Raleigh Cycle Holding and Ever Ready (Great Britain)—the first because of the boom in cycles created by the drastic petrol rationing and the second because of the black-out boom in torches :

	Pre-war Price	Present Price	Div. %	Div. Yield %
Imperial Chemical Industries £1	30/6	28/–	8	£5 14 3
Imperial Tobacco £1	6½	5 7/16	†25 net	6 6 9
United Steel £1	23/–	21/4½	8	7 9 9
Raleigh Cycle Holding £1 ..	38/3	44/6	20	8 19 9
Ever Ready (Gt. Britain) 5/– ..	17/9	22/1½	30	6 15 6

† Tax added back at 5*s.* 6*d.* in £

It is thought in the market that Imperial Tobacco will distribute the same amount of gross dividend this year which means that the rise in income tax to 7*s.* 6*d.* will bring the net dividend down to 21¼ per cent. Perhaps Imperial Tobacco will follow the lead of Courtaulds in 1936 by changing from tax free to gross dividends.

* * *

Investors with holdings of American Securities are still divided on the question whether to sell or not to sell. I notice that Major Angas takes the more cautionary view that the "war-baby" born in Wall Street is dangerous. He believes that the war is likely to be short-lived, but if it is prolonged into a war of attrition, it may force the United States to participate. In the latter event the American industry will be subjected to something like our own Government control and taxation of excess profits. The Dow Jones index of industrials rose to 156 in the boom after the declaration of war but has now relapsed to 152. It might rise to 160 or 165 before the end of the year but I am more inclined to the Angas view that the market will react badly to unfavourable war news from Europe. The intensification of the war in the West, or a spreading of the war in the East might easily lead to a strong preference in Wall Street for cash instead of shares. British investors must not forget that they must register their American holdings by October 9th. They can, of course, still retain them, if they desire, for the time being.

Company Meeting

ASPRO LIMITED

MR. G. M. GARCIA'S ADDRESS

THE Fourth Ordinary General Meeting of Aspro Limited was held on Monday in London. Mr. G. M. Garcia (chairman) presiding said :—

Meeting as we do in this atmosphere of war, your directors hope that a perusal of the accounts has at least brought some slight gratification to the shareholders. The profits on trading for the year ended June 30, 1939, amount to £277,341. After deducting depreciation, directors' fees, company's contribution to the staff pension fund (amounting in the aggregate to £12,431), there remains a sum of £264,909. To this must be added the sum of £11,831 brought forward from last year, making a total available balance of £276,740.

The sum of £95,000 has been transferred to taxation reserve. In this amount provision is made for the company's National Defence Contribution. The net profit figure of £264,909 enables a final dividend of 15 per cent. actual to be paid on the Ordinary stock, bringing the total distribution for the year up to 25 per cent. (the same as the previous year) after payment of the full Preference dividend at the rate of 5½ per cent. per annum and transferring £50,000 to general reserve and £10,000 to dividend equalisation reserve and £16,803 to be carried forward.

The general reserve now totals £200,000 and the dividend equalisation reserve £30,000. Advances to the subsidiary company have been reduced by £6,000 and a further £14,000 worth of debentures have been redeemed during the financial year, making a total debenture redemption of £20,000. The accounts of the subsidiary company show a profit and, notwithstanding the stressful events of to-day, your directors are satisfied that the purchase of Luxaspro S.A. shareholding will continue to prove remunerative. A gratifying feature of the accounts is the increased sales in the export markets. In spite of the difficulties that must confront us in the immediate future, your directors feel it a national duty to prosecute our business in the export field and intend to do everything possible to hold and increase our overseas trade. I would like to pay tribute to the unfailing courtesy and assistance extended to us by the Government Departments concerned which are called upon to perform onerous duties under existing abnormal conditions.

Last year I again expressed the view that there could be no justification on social grounds for the special taxation of products employed to combat or alleviate sickness. In introducing his normal Budget for the present year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced his intention of giving a final quietus to a troublesome question of long standing—that of the Medicine Stamp Duties—by proposing to repeal the tax entirely, as from September 2, 1939. In his Budget statement, and in subsequent debates in the House of Commons, the Chancellor marshalled all the reasons for the repeal of the Medicine Stamp Duties. He said "It is one of the curiosities of the Statute Book"—"A law riddled with absurdities from one end to another"—"A law which nobody in his senses could justify"—"I do not think that the House should stand for it, that medicines are a good subject out of which to raise taxation." His comments were so cogently and logically illustrated that his exposition of the facts, viewed from all aspects, was unassailable.

In the present circumstances, I will refrain from expressing any opinion in regard to the arguments that were adduced, inside as well as outside the House of Commons, against the proposed abolition of this tax; nevertheless, I deem it a matter for regret that the Chancellor should have felt constrained to abandon his intention of repealing the Medicine Stamp Duties. However, later he announced that a committee is to be appointed to examine the whole question, control as well as taxation. I trust that its deliberations may be free from that spirit of partisanship which so often obscures or distorts the real points at issue. I feel that a frank discussion of all aspects of the question between those interested should not fail to secure a measure of agreement acceptable to all and in consonance with the welfare of the public, a postulate which, of course, remains the decisive factor. Some time ago the Proprietary Association of Great Britain, of which your company is an active member, voluntarily imposed upon its members stringent standards and in collaboration with other associations a Bill was recently promoted which afforded effective safeguards for the protection of the public against the activities of unscrupulous persons. We, as manufacturers, are deeply conscious of the duty we owe the public. Your company, through our Association will be unsparing in its endeavours to bring about that co-operation amongst the various sections of the trade which is desirable at all times, but more so at the present juncture. Whilst your directors are opposed to taxation of medicines as such there is no doubt that the heavy burdens imposed by the Chancellor in his Emergency Budget will be willingly shouldered by one and all in order that the war aims may be brought to successful fruition.

The new financial year has opened well. The demand for our product is showing a progressive increase. This applies both to home and export markets. In my various addresses to you I have always mentioned with pride our loyal and efficient staff. This spirit has never been more exemplified than during the recent period of crises, and your directors are seeking to recognise the quality of the services rendered by doing everything possible to see that the families of those employees who are away serving their country do not suffer any undue hardship. The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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Lt.-Col. C. R. SATTERTHWAITE, O.B.E., Secretary.

PHILOSOPHY

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THE LOGICAL BASIS AND STRUCTURE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF — Leslie J. Walker, S.J.
MEANING AND VERIFIABILITY — W. H. F. Barnes, M.A.
IN DEFENCE OF HUME ON MIRACLES — H. J. Maidment, M.A.
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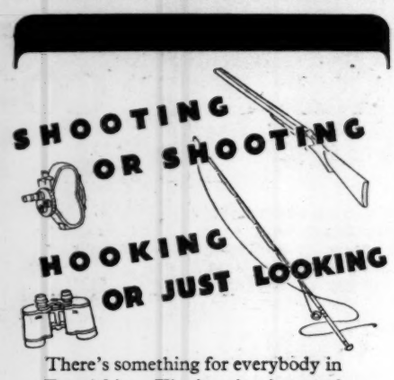

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning service only. Sunday, October 8th, at 11, W. R. LESTER, M.A.: "THE CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF HENRY GEORGE, THE PIONEER OF THE NATIONALISATION OF LAND VALUES."

DOUBTS about Russia? Ask your questions. PAT SLOAN will answer. Friday, October 13th, 7 p.m. Conway Hall. Russia To-day Society.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

ADVISORY SERVICE ON BOARDING SCHOOLS: the offices of CICELY C. WRIGHT Ltd. have been transferred from London to 50 St. Anne's Road, Headington, OXFORD. Schools in "Safe" areas recommended without charge.

KING ALFRED SCHOOL (Co-educational) has removed temporarily from Golders Green and reopened as school for boarders and day pupils (ages 5–18) at Flint Hall Farm, Royston, Herts. Country estate of 180 acres. A.R.P. trenches. Prospectus from SECRETARY.

PINEWOOD, CROWBOROUGH, SUSSEX. Home school for boys and girls, 3–12 years, where environment, diet, psychology and teaching methods maintain health and happiness. ELIZABETH STRACHAN. Crowborough 224.

QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL, Kirkby Lonsdale, Westmorland. Recognised, fully equipped, boys and girls, 10–19. £14,000 additions now complete. Boarding and tuition fee £22 10s. per term.

HOMER SCHOOL, IPSDEN, OXON. 10 Boarders, 10 Day children. Boys and girls, 5–12 years. All subjects. Qualified staff. Country life. Riding.

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BRANKSOME HILDERS, HASLEMERE, SURREY. Boys' Preparatory School. Health, happiness and efficiency in perfect surroundings and safety. Prospectus C.

MALTMAN'S GREEN, GERRARD'S CROSS. *Head Mistress:* MISS CHAMBERS, M.A. (CANTAB.). Aim—to develop character, intellect, healthy growth of child for good of community; to encourage self-expression; increase resource and initiative by practical work. Girls prepared for Universities, Medical Profession and advanced work, Music, Art. Fees include Elocution, Dancing, Cookery. 15 acres grounds.

PINEHURST HOME SCHOOL, GOUDHURST, Kent. Co-education 3 to 12 years. Food reform diet. Sunbathing, Riding. MISS M. B. REID, Goudhurst 116.

NEW HERRLINGEN SCHOOL (recognised by the Board of Education) welcomes children to grow up in a home-like atmosphere. Principal: ANNA ESSINGER, M.A., Otterden, Kent. Tel.: Eastling 206.

HALSTEAD PLACE, Sevenoaks (recognised preparatory) has moved to "a'Beckett's," Littleton Panell, WILTSHIRE, for duration of the war. 18 acres. Ages 7–14. After Christmas, girls only.

ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL, LETCHWORTH (recognised by the Board of Education). A thorough education for boys and girls to 19 years, at moderate fees, in an open-air atmosphere of ordered freedom and progress. Headmaster: H. LYN HARRIS, M.A., LL.B. (Camb.).

BROOKLANDS, Crowborough, Sussex. Pre-prep. school and all-year-round home. Sound early education and careful training. Boys, 3–10. Girls, 3–12. Trained staff. Exceptional health record. Beautiful surroundings. Apply, SECRETARY. Crowborough 299.

THE FROEBEL PREPARATORY AND NURSERY SCHOOL, St. Mary's, Freeland, Oxford. Sound modern education for boys and girls from 5–12 years old.

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Co-educational, Boys and Girls, 6–19, stressing Art, Music, Handicraft and Physical Culture. New Children's House overlooking Derwentwater. Fees: £82.

CUDHAM HALL SCHOOL has moved to PACCOMBE HOUSE, HARCOMBE, nr. SIDMOUTH, DEVON. In beautiful country 350 ft. above sea level and 3 miles from the sea. Vacancies now for children 2–12 years. Apply Principal.

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SCHOOLS—continued

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Application for places should be made to the Principal without delay.

INVAL ST. HILARY'S, HASLEMERE. Progressive girls' school, 8–18. Fees £95 p.a. Limited number day girls.

RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL. Co-educational, boarding and day. From three. King's Langley Priory, Herts.

LANGFORD GROVE SCHOOL is now at Catherstone Manor, Charmouth, Bridport, Dorset. Telephone: Charmouth 32. Especial facilities for advanced work in Literature, Foreign Languages, Music and Art, with a highly qualified resident and visiting staff. Sea-bathing and riding within easy reach.

FYLING HALL SCHOOL, Robin Hood's Bay, Yorkshire. Principals: DR. BRADLEY and MRS. BRADLEY, M.A. Two vacancies in School Certificate Form of eight only for boarders either sex, aged 15 years and upwards. Completely isolated house on Yorkshire Moors. Riding optional. Exceptional record of successes for Matriculation and Public School Scholarships. Inclusive fee for school year, 100 *guineas*.

HAMPDEN SCHOOL. Now at The Chalet, Wytham Great Wood, Eynsham, Oxford, has some vacancies for children 2–10. Arrangements made for all-year schooling, if necessary. Apply LESLIE BREWER, Headmaster, Eynsham 282.

BADMINTON SCHOOL, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol. (A Public School for Girls. Founded 1858.)
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SOUTHERN Ireland. Newtown School, Waterford. 20 acres fields and garden. Co-educational. Accommodation during holidays can be arranged. Apply Headmaster.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, 16 Wedderburn Road, N.W.3, has re-opened for the time being at: Sunnydale, Torcross, Nr. Kingsbridge, S. Devon. Torcross 254. Usual staff retained, boys and girls at all ages from 4–16. Fine airy house on the shore in safe neighbourhood. The Principals: MRS. E. PAUL, Ph.D., and MRS. ENA CURRY.

"L'AVENIR," Villars-sur-Ollon, Switzerland. 4,100ft. Boys and girls, 2 to 18. The School will remain open until further notice, and will try to maintain its standards of international education.

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THE BEDFORD PHYSICAL TRAINING COLLEGE, 37 Lansdowne Road, Bedford. Principal: MISS STANSFELD. Students are trained in this College to become teachers of gymnastics. The course of Training extends over 3 years and includes Educational and Medical Gymnastics, Massage, Dancing, Hockey, Lacrosse, Cricket, Tennis, Netball, etc. Fee £165 per annum. For prospectus apply SECRETARY.

INGE BRANDEIS SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION. Mensendieck system. One year's short intensive training course starting now. Special training in re-educational exercises, first-aid and massage. Apply: 31 Grove Hall Court, N.W.8. Maida Vale 6332.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

WANTED immediately, a resident woman teacher for English subjects with organising experience to teach and supervise two groups of children, ages ranging from 6–12. Write sending photo and full particulars to: St. Mary's School, "Sunnydale," Torcross, nr. Kingsbridge, S. Devon. Tel.: Torcross 254, evacuated from 16, Wedderburn Road, London, N.W.3. Interview in London possible, 2nd week of October.

FOR Pinewood, Crowborough, Sussex. 1. Teacher, man or woman, for small group English subjects, take charge of workshop. 2. Junior matron. Crowborough 224. ELIZABETH STRACHAN.

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